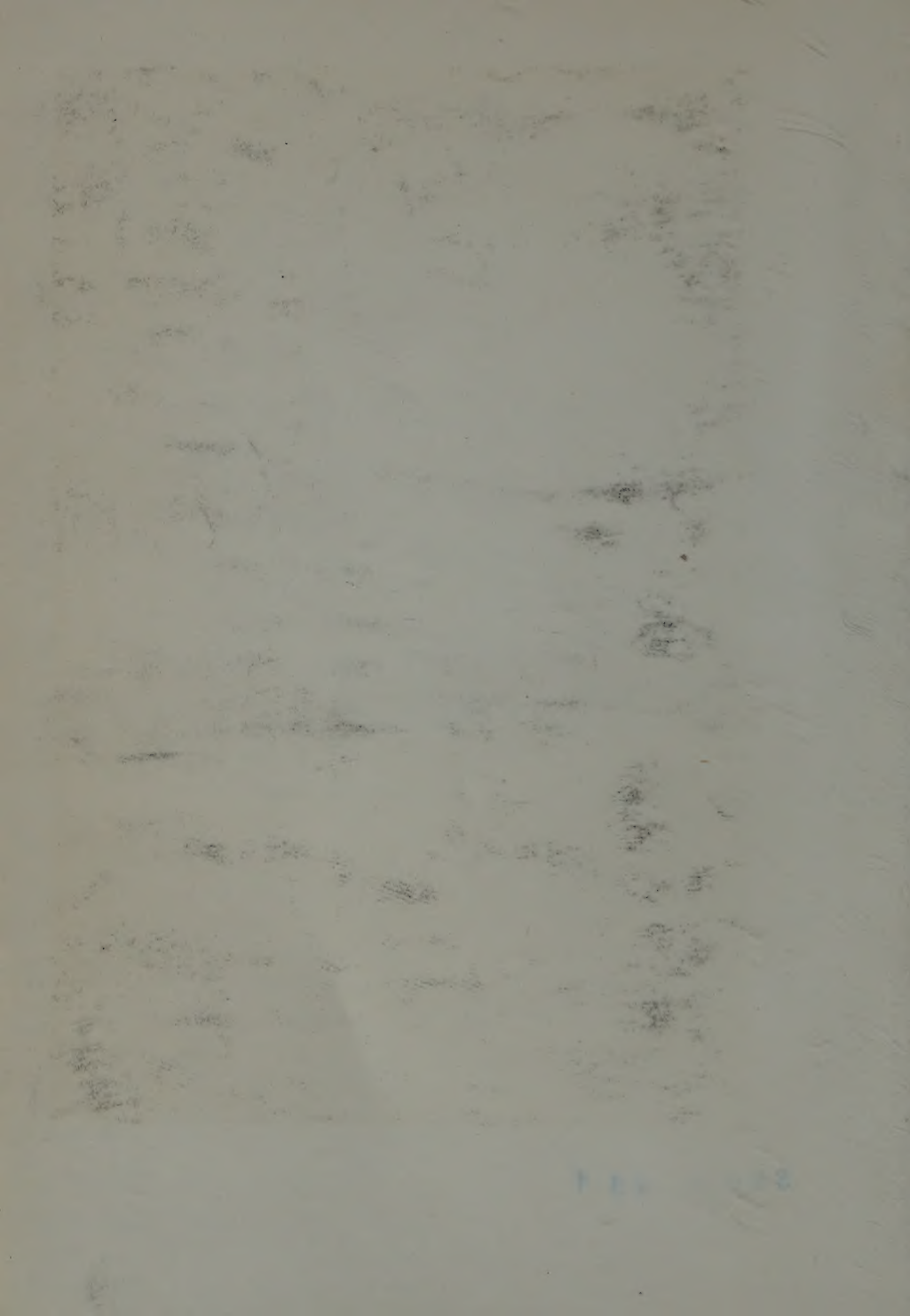


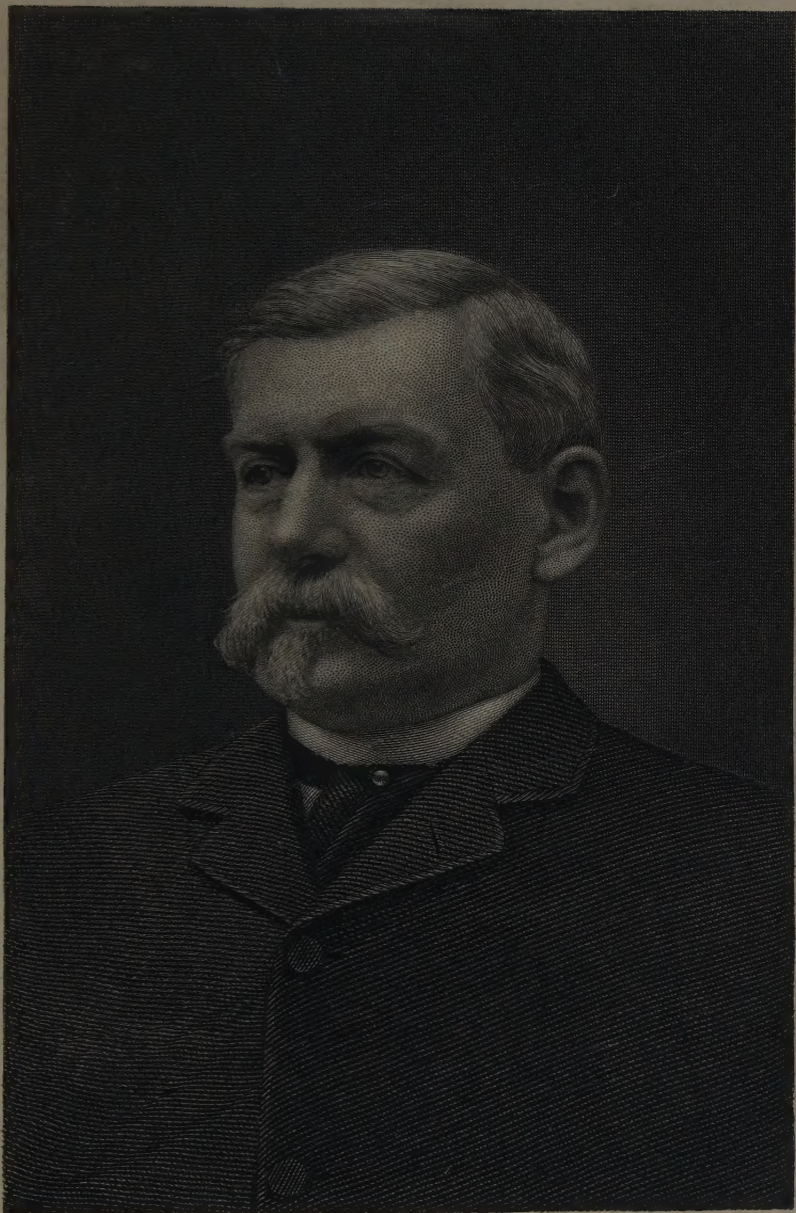
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McCLELLAN'S OWN STORY

THE WAR FOR THE UNION

THE SOLDIERS WHO FOUGHT IT

THE CIVILIANS WHO DIRECTED IT

AND

HIS RELATIONS TO IT AND TO THEM

CHAPTERS I - XIX

BY

GEORGE B. McCLELLAN

LATE MAJOR-GENERAL COMMANDING THE ARMIES

NEW YORK

CHARLES L. WEBSTER & COMPANY

1887

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By ELLEN M. McCLELLAN,

As Executrix of the last will and testament of Geo. B. McClellan, deceased.

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NOTE.—Mr. A. R. Waud accompanied the Army of the Potomac while under McClellan's command, and the illustrations drawn by him are from his original sketches made on the spot in 1862.



STATUETTE BY J. A. BAILLY.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

OF
GEORGE B. McCLELLAN

BY
W. O. PRIME, LL.D.

THE
LIFE, SERVICES, AND CHARACTER
OF
GEORGE B. MCCLELLAN.

GEORGE BRINTON MCCLELLAN, son of George McClellan, M.D., and Elizabeth Brinton McClellan, was born in Philadelphia, Penn., Dec. 3, 1826. His school education was in that city; in 1841 and 1842 in the preparatory school attached to the University of Pennsylvania. He entered the Military Academy at West Point in 1842, graduating in 1846, when he was assigned to the Corps of Engineers as second lieutenant. In Sept. of the same year he went with the army to Mexico, where he served with distinction during the war. He was breveted first lieutenant for gallantry at Contreras and Churubusco, captain for Chapultepec.

At the close of the Mexican war he commanded the engineer company and brought it to West Point, where he served with it, acting also as assistant instructor of practical engineering until 1851. In that year he superintended the construction of Fort Delaware. In 1852 he accompanied Capt. R. B. Marcy on the Red river exploring expedition. In 1853 and 1854 he was on duty in Washington Territory and Oregon, as an engineer officer, exploring a proposed route for the Pacific Railroad.

In the spring of 1855 the government sent a commission of army officers to Europe, instructed to obtain and report information on military service in general, and the practical working of changes then recently made in military systems.

The commission was specially instructed to give attention to the organization of armies, transports for men and horses, embarking and disembarking them, hospitals and ambulances, clothing and camp equipment, arms and ammunition, fortifications and sea-coast defences, engineering operations of a siege in all its branches, siege-trains, bridge-trains, boats, wagons—in short, to study and report on the whole art of war in Europe. As the Crimean war was then in progress, and the British and French forces were besieging Sebastopol, this was an important point for the objects of the commission, which consisted of three officers—Maj. R.

Delafield, Maj. A. Mordecai, and Capt. G. B. McClellan. They proceeded to Europe in the spring of 1855, amply accredited to American representatives and the several governments on whose courtesy they would have to depend for opportunities of study and observation.

The British government extended to them every possible courtesy. From the French and the Russian they could obtain no facilities. They were received in the Crimea with soldierly kindness by Gen. Simpson, who had succeeded Lord Raglan in command of the British forces. Here they had ample opportunity for the study of military operations on a grand scale. Leaving the Crimea in Nov., they pursued their duties in various European states. The list of military posts and fortresses which they examined is very long, abounding in names illustrious in the history of wars. McClellan's Report on the arms, equipments, and organization of "the three arms" was, says a distinguished soldier, "a model of conciseness and accurate information, and added to his already brilliant reputation." It may be noted as an interesting fact that the Secretary of War who issued the elaborate instructions to this commission, and selected its members for their special ability and fitness, was Jefferson Davis. Five years later, when he was at the head of a political and military rebellion, one of the commissioners utilized his experience and information in organizing and leading the armies of the Union for its suppression.

In Jan., 1857, McClellan, then captain in the 1st Cavalry, resigned his commission and accepted employment, first as chief-engineer, afterward as vice-president, of the Illinois Central Railroad Company. Later he became president of the Eastern Division of the Ohio and Mississippi Railroad Company.

On the 22d May, 1860, he married Ellen Mary Marcy, daughter of Capt. (afterward Gen.) Randolph B. Marcy, and established his residence at Cincinnati, O., where he was occupied in his business when the civil war began, and he offered his services to his country.

No volunteer in the army made greater personal sacrifices. He was in the enjoyment of a large income; his prospects in life were brilliant. Like all soldiers of the old army, he had led a wandering life, with no one place to call a home. He had now for the first time made for himself a place of rest with his young wife, in which they were gathering those personal belongings which go so far to make life happy and rest delightful. The sacrifices of the soldier's wife are as great, often greater, than those of the husband. McClellan's wife was a soldier's daughter. The spirit of obedience to the call of duty ruled them both alike. No words can fitly express the perfectness of that love which was the light of both their lives. It was expressed in a few lines of his letters which I have suffered to appear in this volume, in a thousand passages and words which are omitted.

His life from April, 1861, to Nov., 1862, forms the subject of this narrative, which I have entitled "McClellan's Own Story."

He was commissioned major-general of volunteers in Ohio on the 23d April, 1861.

On the 14th May he was made major-general in the United States army and placed in command of the Department of the Ohio.

On the 26th May he issued a proclamation to the Union men of Western Virginia, and an address to his soldiers whom he led to what has been known as the Western Virginia campaign. On the 22d July, having freed Western Virginia from secessionists and preserved its people to the Union, he was summoned to Washington, and, arriving there on the 26th, was assigned to command the Division of the Potomac.

He found Washington in a perilous condition. The defeat at Bull Run had demoralized the administration and the army. No one had formed any, the most vague, idea of what was to be done or how to do anything. Up to this time the administration had shared with the people of the North and an unconsidering press the opinion that the rebellion was but a mob, to be scattered in one or two free fights by impetuous onsets of patriotic men. Now the shout, "On to Richmond," had been suddenly and appallingly hushed. Paralysis had followed. Not even Scott or McDowell, or any military adviser of the administration and people, had thought of making ordinary military provision for the defence of Washington against an enemy whose shell might at any moment shatter the dome of the Capitol. The military condition of the whole country, Western Virginia alone excepted, was chaotic.

Probably there were other men in America as well fitted by natural ability and education for the great work in hand, but they did not appear. No other one has been indicated as the proper man for the occasion. That occasion demanded a calm foresight of the vast needs of the country in the coming, the then present, peril, the ability to provide for every one of them, and—the expression is homely but precise—the staying power to make the provision perfectly, calmly, completely, unmoved by the cries, however honest and anxious, of an alarmed people, equally unmoved by the criticisms of the envious and the clamors of the unprincipled.

If the wisdom which sought the ablest military advice in that moment of alarm had been displayed throughout the war by entrusting to military knowledge and ability the conduct of campaigns and the direction and execution of the work of war, the expense of treasure and blood would have been vastly less, and the end would have been much more speedy. Instead of this, after McClellan had assured the safety of the capital, and the alarm of the civilians had subsided, they assumed the direction, interfered with and delayed military preparations, and undertook the specific management of campaigns and armies, while they took care that the delays and defeats which they caused should be charged on soldiers in the field.

We who were then living can with the utmost difficulty carry our minds back to the conditions under which McClellan was called to save the capital and country. It is impossible for the present generation to realize the blindness of the people or appreciate the prevision of the young general. We now look back to all that which he foresaw, foretold, and provided for. So intense had been popular feeling that it was regarded

as treason to think or say that secession was in great strength, that the South would not be easily conquered.

He was alone in the clear atmosphere, above the scene of physical and political warfare, and saw what others could not or would not see. Mr. Lincoln probably came nearer to accepting his views than any one else. From this time on the President reposed confidence in him; and there is small reason for doubt that, but for the interference of politicians, Lincoln and McClellan would have brought the war to an end in the summer of 1862. But Mr. Lincoln soon had two wars on his hands. He was at the head of the Union and at the head of a political party. Both were threatened with division. He desired to save both, probably believing that the unity of his party was essential to the saving of the country. In this view can be explained much which is otherwise inexplicable in his dealings with the general, to whom up to the very last he gave the most frank and full private assurances of his confidence.

The "staying" powers of McClellan were the salvation of the Union. Alone in his outlook, he was alone in the execution of his great work. The fortification of Washington accomplished, and a sufficient force organized and disciplined for its defence, he directed his labors to the next great need—an army. The people, the sovereigns, had not the remotest conception of the meaning of the word "army." Very few soldiers in this country had grasped the idea. No one but McClellan had observed that the able and educated soldiers of the South had long been organizing that vast machine which, once created, moves with irresistible force over all obstacles until met by another machine of like construction and greater power, or which is handled with greater skill. The Army of the Potomac grew like a vast engine constructed by a master-mind. Its history is the reward of the constructor, ample, and the only reward he ever received.

There was one characteristic of McClellan's mind which some would regard as a defect, and which certainly placed him at a disadvantage in his relations with the men in Washington. He was slow to suspect evil of any man. This trait was exhibited in his private life, and he never wholly lost it. The philosophic reader will find interest in the indications afforded in his letters of his gradual awakening to the controlling presence in Washington of a class of men known as politicians. Soldiers, accustomed to honest service for definite purposes, imbued with high principles of honor, can with difficulty recognize the existence of men in public life who are willing to manage public interests for private or party gain.

He knew the past history of his country by heart. He remembered the illustrious names and records of men whose high ambition had been to serve the people as statesmen, whom no one had ever thought to charge with personal or party motive in any of their acts as trustees and representatives of the people. Was the day of such American senators and representatives gone by? Was legislation henceforth to be for the perpetuation of hold on office, for the success of party, with the mere pretence of good to country? Now that the general trust of governmental powers had

become a specific trust of blood to be poured out and treasure to be expended for the salvation of the Union, it did not occur to him that any of the trustees could dream of using that treasure and blood for personal advantage. When men professed honest patriotism he believed them.

Nor do the people themselves, in times of excitement, yield readily to the belief that among their leaders are some who are not honest and patriotic. But in calm retrospect they are generally more wise. It would not be difficult already to make a catalogue of names of men who were prominent in Washington and elsewhere during the war, who secured for the time the reputation of patriotic leaders of opinion and directors of events, whose memories have been allowed, as they deserved, to rot.

All our history demonstrates how such men abound, and secure influence and power at every seat of government, municipal and general, wherever patronage is to be distributed and money to be expended. They are very ignorant indeed who imagine that, in the greatest opportunity for such men ever afforded in America, there were none of them at the front. They were legion.

The history of the war is inextricably involved in the history of party politics. No one can understand the former without knowledge of the latter. Nor can the great services of McClellan be in any way estimated, his marvellous steadfastness in duty, his herculean work in Washington, and his brilliant career at the head of the Army of the Potomac, without giving full value to the fact that from a short time after his arrival in Washington politicians formed an enemy in his rear often more formidable to him and his army than the enemy in their front toward whom alone the eyes of the people were then directed.

The Republican party which re-elected Mr. Lincoln in 1864 was not the same party, either in principles or in voters, which had elected him in 1860. The Democratic party of later years is not in any aspect the party of Mr. Buchanan's time. Old issues were dead, annihilated by the fire on Fort Sumter. The Republican party-machinery existed, the machine politicians held it in hand, and ardent partisans throughout the country kept up a semblance of party distinction by denouncing all opponents as sympathizers with secession and traitors. But in the early summer of 1861 there was but one party in the North, the party of the Union and Constitution. Here and there was a Southern sympathizer whose utterances furnished material for newspapers and orators to grow wild about, but the number of these was insignificant. The entire body of the Northern people were united in one sentiment. And this enthusiastic unanimity was the more wonderful because there had been a very widespread sympathy in the North with the doctrine of secession, on which the leaders of the South had based much expectation. This sympathy was not in one political party alone. Startling as the statement may be to some, the fact is easily demonstrated that there had been as many if not more secessionists among Northern Republicans than Democrats. There is no more trustworthy indication of a man's political opinions than the doctrines taught by the newspaper he takes regularly and reads reli-

giously. One powerful Northern journal taught that the right of secession was as clear as the rights asserted in the Declaration of Independence, that a Union pinned together by bayonets was not worth having, that the erring sisters ought to be let go. This journal claimed and had 200,000 subscribers, which implies at least a half million regular readers, a large part of whom accepted the doctrine of secession. There was a body of men in the North, of considerable numbers, known as the Abolitionists, who had steadily advocated disunion, their motto being, "The Constitution of the United States is a league with death and a covenant with hell." Many of them were voters with the Republican party. It is therefore unquestionable that a considerable portion of the Republican party had been indoctrinated into a belief not only of the right but of the desirableness of the secession of the Southern States. That a considerable portion of the Democrats had held the same views no one doubts. But the challenge to arms was accepted by Republicans and Democrats with one voice and act. All sympathy with secession vanished, and it would be absurd now to deny that there were as many Democrats as Republicans among the volunteer soldiery of the war.

The people and the army thought of one subject only—the suppression of the rebellion, while politicians, Democrats as well as Republicans, looked to the spoils of present power and the means of confirming that power in future elections.

Congress, at the moment of McClellan's arrival in Washington, as if to instruct him in his duty, expressed the unanimous sentiment of the North in a resolution which declared "that the present deplorable civil war has been forced upon the country by the disunionists of the Southern States, now in revolt against the constitutional government, and in arms around the capital; that in this national emergency Congress, banishing all feeling of mere passion or resentment, will recollect only its duty to its country; that this war is not waged, on our part, in any spirit of oppression, nor for any purpose of conquest or subjugation, nor purpose of overthrowing or interfering with the rights or established institutions of those States, but to defend and maintain the supremacy of the Constitution and to preserve the Union, with all the dignity, equality, and rights of the several States unimpaired; and as soon as these objects are accomplished the war ought to cease."

McClellan accepted this instruction. It expressed his own views and those of every lover of his country in the North.

But if this purpose were achieved in this way the Southern States, kept in the Union by a strong hand, would reappear in future elections as a solid South against the machine politicians who had gained power in 1860. If the white vote could be suppressed and the slaves be freed with the immediate right of suffrage, their vote might be controlled and a solid South secured for those who had given them the right of voting. But how could the people be led to favor this policy?

Various schemes were devised to accomplish the desired end. For a time efforts were made to induce the North to adopt a policy which

Mr. Chase formulated in an interview with Mr. Wade of the Senate and Mr. Ashley of the House, Dec. 11, 1861.

Mr. Chase said (Warden, p. 390) that a State attempting to secede, the State government being placed in hostility to the Federal government, "the State organization was forfeited, and it lapsed into the condition of a Territory"; that "we could organize territorial courts, and, as soon as it became necessary, a territorial government"; that "those States could not properly be considered as States in the Union, but must be readmitted from time to time as Congress should provide." Mr. Wade and Mr. Ashley were understood to concur in this doctrine; and, as matter of fact, it was given out as sound doctrine and was widely advocated in newspapers and at war-meetings engineered by politicians in various parts of the North.

Mr. Chase was too good a lawyer not to recognize the absurdity of the doctrine as American law. It was pure secession doctrine at bottom, and subversive of the whole system of government in all the States. The firmness of conservative Republicans, and the adherence of Mr. Lincoln to the doctrine of the Congressional resolution, kept a large portion of the people from accepting it. Perhaps the greatest service which Mr. Lincoln rendered his country was in the sagacious manner in which he prevented this revolutionary doctrine from becoming the avowed policy of a party. Its success would have been more fatal to the Constitution than the acknowledgment of the Southern Confederacy.

The abolition of slavery as "a war measure" was proposed and advocated at the same time. This was more popular. But neither Mr. Lincoln nor any military authority could perceive its practical use as a weapon of war, and, although a tremendous pressure was brought to bear on the President, he steadily refused to issue "a bull against a comet." The political position was therefore complicated. The process of coalition, by which politicians who had been Democrats as well as Republicans came together and formed the radical wing of the Republican party, is worthy the study of every one interested in the history of popular government. A powerful combination was formed. It had no leader, for too many of its members were "every man for himself," while each was seeking one or another personal benefit. Its common purpose was to manage the war in such way as to secure control of the country in the elections in 1864 and afterwards.

There was a body of noble, conservative, and patriotic men in the old Republican party strong enough to interpose many obstacles in the way of the radicals. The latter adopted the customary tactics of unscrupulous partisans in this country, and visited on all who opposed them storms of foul epithets and charges of sympathy with the rebellion. Mr. Lincoln was alternately praised and vilified. But no one of the radical coalition was his friend or desired his continuance at the head of the party. Some old Democratic politicians, recognizing good prospects of its success, joined the radical party. Congress in time yielded to its control. A committee called The Committee on the Conduct of the War was created, to

cessor to Mr. Cameron. The religious emotion with which Mr. Chase recorded the success of this scheme indicates the view he had of its vital importance to the radical cause.

Mr. Stanton was a lawyer of moderate abilities, a man of peculiar mental constitution. Without moral principle or sense of personal honor, he was equally ready to change front in public politics and to betray private friendship, and was therefore eminently suited to the purposes for which he was selected by the men with whom he had formed a secret alliance. But he was as untrustworthy in that as in other associations, and at the very moment when Mr. Chase, confiding in him, was intriguing to bring him into the cabinet, he betrayed Mr. Chase's confidences and defeated his plans, for his own purposes. Those who knew him well were in the habit of describing him as one of those who "always kick down the ladder by which they have climbed." His ambition was unbounded and his self-reliance absolute. He did not depend, as do ordinary politicians, on a larger or smaller body of followers and political dependants. No one shared his aspirations, and none were to claim gratitude or reward in his successes.

All times of great popular excitement and national peril bring into view remarkable characters. None more remarkable than his appears in the history of the civil war; none will be a more interesting subject to the student of human nature. With opportunity to achieve greatness and with a people's gratitude such as few others had, he used it in such way that in the calm retrospect of a quarter of a century his countrymen look at him with sorrowful shame, and few name him with respect, except here and there a survivor of the alliance whose purposes he served. He was supposed to be energetic, but he was only spasmodic, and in his spasms of impulsive judgment and action committed errors costly beyond all measure in the money of the treasury and the lives of soldiers. Himself honest in money matters, a host of plunderers fattened without check on the money provided by the people and scattered in his improvident and reckless management of the department. With the men and means lavishly placed at his disposal by the people, a War Secretary of sound sense, cool discretion, honest purpose, and the good judgment to accept military advice and instruction for military operations, would have conducted the war at an expense of hundreds where it was thousands of millions. But Mr. Stanton's errors of self-reliance were aggravated by the fact that he not only had no military knowledge, but by his peculiar disposition was incapacitated to receive military instruction. A very foolish letter which he published revealed his ignorance of the simplest principles on which success in war depends. His suspension of all recruiting at the moment of opening active operations in the field was a blunder unparalleled in military history, as well as a crime. His inability to receive military instruction has singular illustration in a letter, recently made public.*

* Letter to Rev. H. Dyer, dated May 18, 1862, read in the House of Representatives June 8, 1866.

be the machine of partisan politics, in control of the most unscrupulous leaders of the combination, who used it to good effect in the deception of the confiding people of the country.

It is profoundly interesting, and there is something grotesque in it also, to observe how the shrewd and far-seeing Lincoln kept the headship of both elements, conservative and radical, prevented their often-threatened division into two parties, defeated each of the rival candidates for his office, and finally compelled his own re-nomination and their support in his re-election.

To secure for their purposes the leader of the armies had been one of the first and most important objects of the radicals. If a victor he was morally certain to become the idol of the people. "What can we make out of McClellan?" was the question of all; "What can I make out of McClellan?" was the question of each. Thus in that marvellous apocalypse, his private diary, Mr. Chase writes (Warden, p. 500) that a friend said to him, "Col. Key often expressed his regret that McClellan had not conferred with me and *acted in concert with me*. I replied that I thought if he had that the rebellion would be ended now." "I . . . was quite willing he should repeat to McClellan what I had said." Undoubtedly had McClellan attached himself to Mr. Chase, or any other Presidential candidate, in the manner suggested, he would have been supported by a powerful political combination. But the bargains of politics were foreign to his work and nature. He was creating an army and using it for the people, not for himself; certainly not for Mr. Chase or any other aspirant to position.

The success of McClellan in 1862 would have been doubly fatal to the politicians. The old Union would have been restored and the general would command the political situation. Therefore McClellan must not be successful. His popularity must be destroyed. Whatever of falsehood could be invented must be published concerning him. His successes must be decried. Above all, he must not be allowed to win a decisive victory. Neither a quick ending of the war nor a victorious campaign by McClellan would ensure to party success.

The argument of personal rivalry and party requirement was pressed on Mr. Lincoln without success. However loyal McClellan was to his country, the Secretary of the Treasury said he urged his removal because "he was not loyal to the administration."

As it began to be evident that Mr. Lincoln would not adopt the radical policy, nor discharge McClellan and appoint some general suited to partisan considerations, it became important to gain the War Department, and place in it a secretary who would do what the President would not. Thus the course of the war could be controlled, generals could be driven with reins, the President himself could be deceived, misled, to some extent managed.

Mr. Edwin M. Stanton was selected, and Mr. Chase, with great adroitness, described by himself, induced Mr. Lincoln to appoint him as suc-

which he wrote to a friend a few weeks after the siege of Yorktown. When McClellan entered on the Peninsular campaign his entire plan of campaign rested on his purpose to throw the 1st corps in rear of Yorktown, turn that fortified position, and clear the way for a rapid advance to Richmond. The withdrawal of the 1st corps from his army at the very instant it was to have been thus utilized defeated the plan of campaign, rendered necessary the siege of Yorktown and the adoption of a new plan with a reduced army. Innumerable letters and despatches besides those given in McClellan's narrative made these facts clear to all, excepting the War Department. Mr. Stanton wrote in this private letter to a confidential friend: "The force retained from his [McClellan's] expedition *was not needed, and could not have been employed by him*"!

One of his co-secretaries says that his hostility to McClellan began when he entered the cabinet. He was, indeed, but one of the organized enemy in the rear of the Army of the Potomac and their commander, but he was the executive of their plots as well as of his own. Professing always devoted personal attachment to and admiration of the general, he opened his private correspondence with his wife; circulated with vindictive malice falsehoods and slanders, petty and great, to his injury; misrepresented him to, and sought to embroil him with, the President; and deliberately planned and executed the defeat of the Peninsular campaign. The accusation is most grave and terrible; but it was made to him in person by the general of the army, and his reception of it was a confession of its awful truth. For at midnight, June 27-28, when McClellan found his army in the toils into which Mr. Stanton had led them and there abandoned them, the general, anticipating his own possible death with thousands of the men he loved, sent a despatch to the secretary the like of which was never sent by commander in the field to superior at home. Every line was weighty, every word solemn. It was the free outpouring of a great soul conscious of the approach of death. There are no erasures in the original draft which lies before me. It concluded with this denunciation: "If I save this army now, I tell you plainly that I owe no thanks to you or to any other persons in Washington. *You have done your best to sacrifice this army.*"

The secretary received the accusation in silence which was the confession of its truth. If it were not true, McClellan deserved, and would have received, quick punishment for the gross insubordination, and the country would have justified any imposed penalty. If Mr. Stanton had dared dispute its truth and appeal on the facts to the honest judgment of a court-martial of the country, he would, of course, have done so. Not only did he fail to resent it, but he kept the despatch secret; and when, some time later, it was laid before the Committee on the Conduct of the War, the concluding sentences above quoted were suppressed! It appears thus mutilated in that mass of worthless because falsified and untrustworthy rubbish which forms a large part of the printed report of that committee. The secretary's personal reply to the general was the affectionate

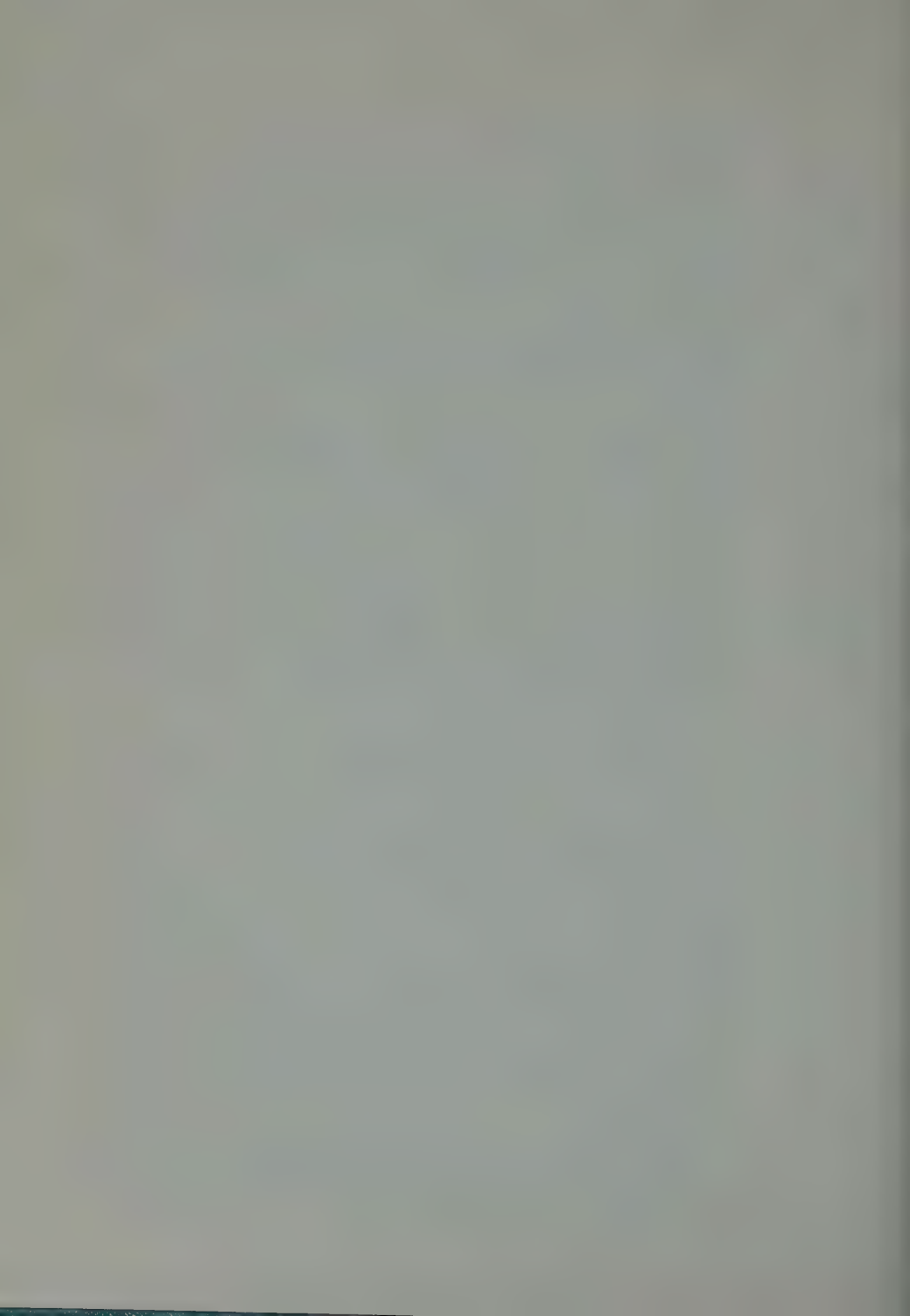
letter of July 3 professing his devotion. His practical reply was to go with Mr. Chase to the President and urge the sending of Gen. Pope to supersede McClellan.

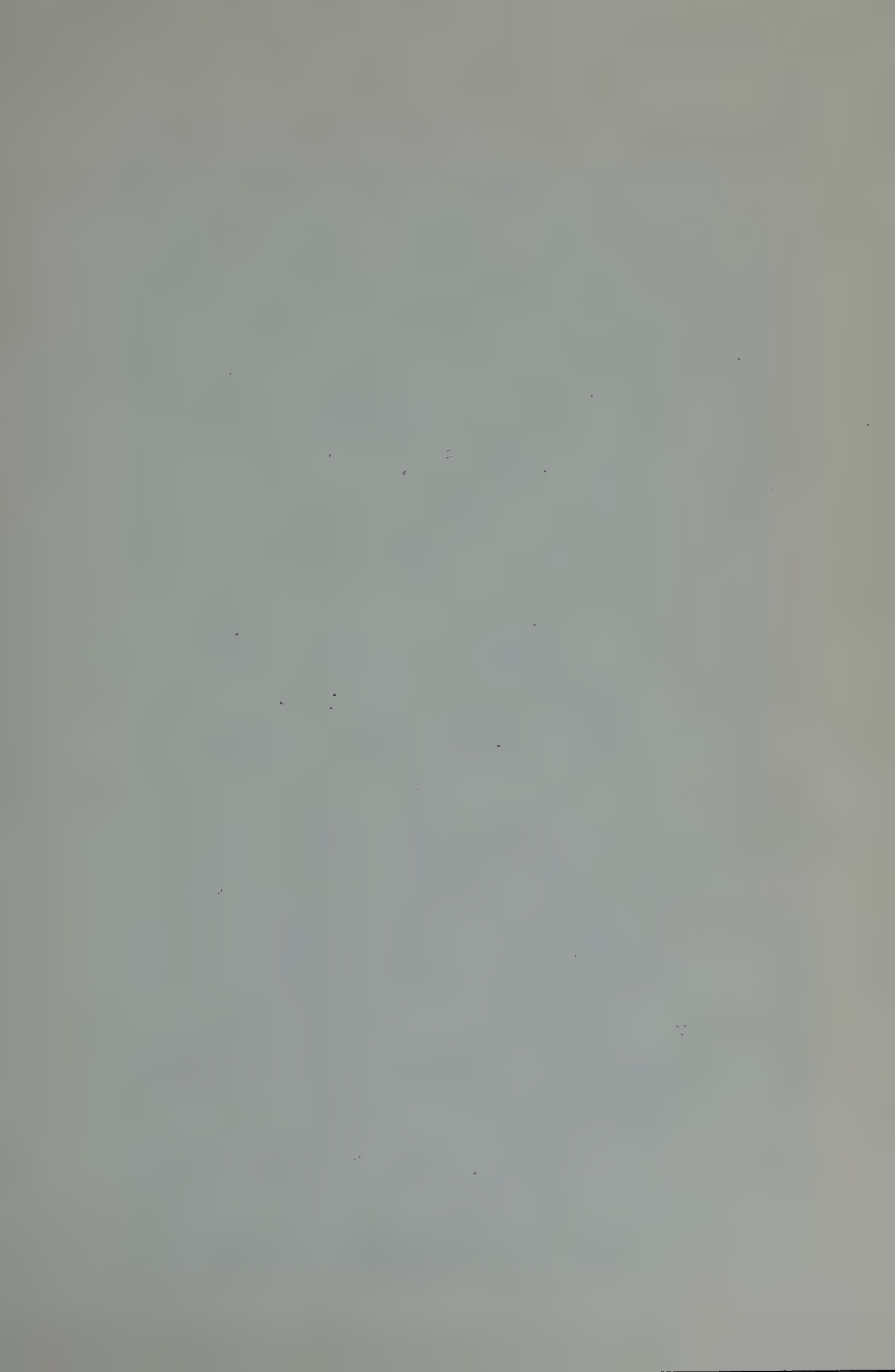
The soldiers of the Union went into the field everywhere with a mind of this sort to use them as it would. If conscience ever asserted itself in that strange mind, always alternating in passionate emotions of anger and fear, the set faces of a half-million dead soldiers must have haunted it waking and sleeping.

While politicians were plotting McClellan was working. It is impossible to over-estimate the laborious character of the general's life. His whole soul was in his work; his every energy and thought was given to it. He was always, while in Washington and while in the field, in the habit of seeing personally, as far as possible, to the execution of important orders. Out of countless illustrations of this which might be given, let one suffice. The lieutenant-colonel of that superb regiment, the 1st Conn. Artillery, wrote to me from the works before Yorktown that, a little after midnight the previous rainy night, while the men were at work in the trenches, McClellan rode up, attended by a single orderly, sprang from his horse, inspected the work, gave some directions, remounted, and rode away. About three A.M. he reappeared as before, approved the work, gave further directions, and vanished. My correspondent met him at his headquarters before seven A.M., and also met there a friend, whose regiment was stationed some miles away, who told him that the general had surprised them by a visit and inspection at about two A.M. The soldiers soon learned not to be surprised at his appearance among them anywhere, at any hour of day or night.

He made Washington secure, he created the Army of the Potomac, he gathered the vast material for a war. Called to the chief command, he brought order out of chaos in all the armies; he organized the first and only plan for the war in all the country; he sent successful expeditions, with detailed orders, to North Carolina, New Orleans, and elsewhere, in pursuance of his comprehensive scheme, in which concerted action everywhere was to be in direct relation to the chief act—the taking of Richmond. On this plan the war went on after his retirement. When he was ready to wield the vast power he had created, he left Washington at the head of the Army of the Potomac to strike the decisive blow at Richmond. Instantly the operations of the enemy in the rear began. He was removed from the command-in-chief, and no successor appointed. All his comprehensive plan was shattered. The War Secretary, succeeding practically to the command, neglected even to carry out his orders for the completion of the defences of Washington. The subsequent defeat of Pope was directly chargeable to this neglect, and other like neglects led to other disasters.

When he reached the Peninsula and met the enemy his army was suddenly reduced by the withdrawal of one-third of its force. He had planned to turn Yorktown; he now went over it. The country rang with the preconcerted outcry which the politicians raised. The siege of Yorktown





was denounced as slow. It occupied less than twenty days, and has no parallel for swiftness in the history of the war.

The plan of campaign having been overturned by the reduction of the army, the general formed a new plan and advanced rapidly on it. Again the War Department interfered and defeated it, ordering him to stretch his right to the north of Richmond to effect the junction of McDowell's corps, now promised, but to come overland. Again and again McDowell was coming, but never came. His advance was within sound of McClellan's cannon when he was finally withdrawn. Assuredly if the Secretary had deliberately planned the destruction of the army he would have given precisely the orders he did, and would have handled the 1st corps exactly as he did handle it. No trap could have been better set by an enemy. Only the consummate generalship of McClellan and the heroism of the Army of the Potomac in the successful battles of the Seven Days saved it from the fate to which it had been consigned.

The Army of the Potomac was recalled to Washington instead of being reinforced on the banks of the James. All the lives and all the agonies of the country which were expended in regaining that same position two years afterwards were wasted for the only purpose of getting rid of McClellan.

There are many open questions in regard to the treatment which McClellan received from the power behind the throne in Washington, which will be answered only when more such records as Mr. Chase's private diary shall be discovered and published. Why was Gen. Halleck authorized to assure McClellan that he was recalled to Washington to take command of the combined forces, his own army and Gen. Pope's? Was there then, and continuously afterward, in the minds of Mr. Stanton and his associates, a fear of McClellan and the army? The charge was not infrequently made that he intended to seize the government. The devotion of the army to him, with their indignation at his and their treatment by the War Department, might arouse apprehension in minds not noted for personal courage. It is no secret that this fear prevailed in the War Department after Sept. 2, and especially when the final order was sent relieving McClellan. Possibly such apprehension had something to do with the holding out to the general the idea that he was to command the combined forces, and with the adoption of the plan of withdrawing the army from his command instead of relieving him. That the President had no part in this ultimate purpose can hardly be doubted. He honestly desired to see an army always between Washington and the enemy, nor did he or Mr. Stanton learn till years afterward, when Grant was south of Richmond, the military truth which McClellan reiterated, that the true defence of Washington was on the bank of the James river.

It is hardly worth while now to say that if any such fears prevailed among the men in Washington it was because they could not realize the possible existence of such an upright, pure, and unselfish servant of his country as McClellan. He entertained no thought of anything to be done by him except duty. Absolutely obedient to orders, he accepted as

his work whatever his superiors set before him. It was not till the fate of the country depended on his assuming power and exercising it with out orders that, staking his life for the people, he led the army to South Mountain and Antietam.

There is no passage in the history of any man who has ever lived more startling in the contrasts it presents than the story of McClellan's recall and return to Washington. The commander who had for months been the victim of political intrigues, baffled in every effort to serve his country, ordered against his judgment and protest hither and thither by ignorant and inimical superiors, the general loving and loved by a great army now removed from his command, sat, or paced to and fro, with a little group of staff officers and a few wounded veterans around him in his tent, listening in anxiety beyond words to the sound of distant cannon firing on his old troops, and was even compelled to ask the password for the night from the military governor of the small city in whose outskirts his tent was pitched. His personal enemies had triumphed. The war was now to be very long and very bloody. They had effected his disgrace. But a few hours changed the scene. The defeated army of the Union was rushing homeward in broken masses. An exultant enemy was marching on the capital. The War Secretary and the nominal general-in-chief, the trustees of the Union and the military heads of the squad of politicians who had brought about the disaster, had ordered the arsenal to be emptied and abandoned—it was said also, to be burned. Frightened at the awful catastrophe they had caused, the politicians disappeared from sight and were not seen or heard by the people again until, with recovered breath, in assured safety, they reopened their attack on the general toward whom, for the time, all eyes in the land were directed as the only possible saviour of his country.

The people, in the person of their President, who alone in Washington preserved sound judgment and a serene mind, went to the lately insulted and displaced general, and, with tears not unfitting the occasion (for his tears were the emotion of a betrayed and outraged nation), asked him to forget his wrongs and save the country. The falsehood was afterward circulated that he hesitated and sought to make conditions. He accepted the new responsibility instantly, for every second was of priceless value. He saved the arsenal which cowardice would have destroyed. The wild scene of joy with which the army received him can never be the subject of the artist's pencil, for it was in the darkness of night, among the Virginia forests, when the good horse of the general, accompanied by one faithful aid, the gallant Colburn, brought him at that tremendous pace the soldiers knew, to meet them retreating, gloomy as the black night that lay on the hills around them. But the wild shout of welcome that rolled from company to company and corps to corps was prophetic of South Mountain and Antietam.

Who shall say that the soldiers of the Army of the Potomac did not know that man, and that he did not merit their admiring love?

He gathered them in his hand. He made a new army of the defeated,

disorganized, and decimated regiments of his own army and the Army of Virginia, reorganized it and supplied its pressing needs as it marched, followed and overtook the exultant enemy, flushed with success, in Maryland, and in fifteen days after that night of disastrous retreat led his heroic troops to the victorious fields of South Mountain and Antietam.

It is one of the settled truths of history that constant reiteration of a statement, however untrue, will impress many minds with its truthfulness. The impatience of the people afforded to the enemies of McClellan the opportunity to represent him as constitutionally slow. There are not a few who believe it. There was no foundation for the slur; and any one who studies dates and informs himself of the actual time occupied by him in any of his work will be surprised at the currency which such a criticism obtained. He was calm and cool in judgment, never impulsive, but always as rapid in action as the circumstances required. If campaigns are to be compared, it is well to note that in the West Virginia and the Maryland campaigns he was his own master and director, while the Peninsular campaign was actually three several campaigns, so made by the interference of the War Department, and all three subject to that constant interference.

The order of Aug. 30 had removed McClellan from the command of the Army of the Potomac. The order of Sept. 2 had only placed him in command of the fortifications of Washington. The history of this order is sufficiently discussed in a note on page 538, etc. He had, for the safety of the country and the preservation of the Union, assumed command and fought the battles of South Mountain and Antietam with "a halter around his neck." No change was made in his command after the battle of Antietam. The entire confidence with which he had received the orders of the President on the morning of Sept. 2 was characteristic. When asked afterward why he did not on that occasion ask written orders, he replied, with a smile, "It was no time for writing, and in fact I never thought of it."

The President fully approved of his determination not to lead the army on an offensive campaign into Virginia without shoes, clothing, and supplies, and without horses for cavalry and transportation. The table which will be found on pages 632, 633 of this volume demonstrates beyond cavil both the necessities of the troops and the dates at which they were supplied. Without supplies, cavalry, or transportation, no general would have moved an hour sooner than he did. When ready he moved with his accustomed rapidity and skill. The movement accomplished his purpose. He had placed the enemy at a fatal disadvantage. If he were brought to battle there was no reasonable doubt that McClellan had so divided him that he would be beaten in detail. If he declined battle the Army of the Potomac had the inside track in a race to Richmond. In either event McClellan was about to win another and a decisive victory.

Some one reported to the politicians in Washington the imminent danger of a great Union victory by the army under McClellan. Perhaps

when time reveals correspondence it will be known who sent the intelligence. McClellan's despatches had communicated facts, not expectations. There was no visible reason for interfering with him at this moment. But the final pressure now brought to bear on the President was successful. He issued a discretionary order to Gen. Halleck, who made haste to exercise the discretion at once, and Nov. 5, 1862, McClellan was ordered to turn over the command to Burnside and go to Trenton, N. J. He lies there now on a hill overlooking the Delaware. But he never received there, or elsewhere, order, thanks, or any recognition from the government of his country.

Nor did he ever expect or desire it. To him, as to all pure minds, the ample compensation for labor and self-sacrifice was in the consciousness of duty done. He held himself in readiness to serve the cause should his services be needed, but they were not sought.

In 1864 the political elements were still in a chaotic condition. Two parties had been evolved from the exciting conditions caused by the war and the ambitions of politicians. The great body of conservative men were practically unattached to either. The Democratic party nominated him for the Presidency. His reluctant acceptance of the nomination was a new service, not his smallest, to the Republic, concentrating the conservative element in the country on a platform which he made for himself in his letter of acceptance, placing his supporters firmly on the principle of supporting the war and prosecuting it vigorously till the Union and Constitution should be established in safety. How many votes he received will never be known, for the "count" was in the hands of those who had not scrupled to defeat him in battles with the enemies of the Union. The soldiers' votes were effectually disposed of by the Secretary of War.

He had not expected to be elected, and the result was a great relief to him. His earnest desire had always been to regain the enjoyments of home life, of which he had had so brief an experience.

He resigned his commission as major-general in the army on the day of the Presidential election, Nov. 8, 1864, and immediately sought work as a civilian for the support of his family.

But the bitterness of political enmity followed him into private life. His eminent abilities made his services desirable to many great corporations, and he was offered one and another position of honorable employment, such as he desired. In each case he ascertained that the offer was made by a majority over a minority who had strong prejudices against him and opposed his appointment. Acceptance was impossible to him under such circumstances. In Jan., 1865, he went to Europe with his family. His reasons were sad enough, expressed to me in a sentence I well remember: "I cannot find a place to earn my living here, and I am going to stay abroad till I am forgotten, then come back and find work, which I may get when these animosities have cooled down."

But the people would not forget him. In 1868, when it was rumored that he was coming home, soldiers and citizens proposed to receive him with honors. He wrote emphatically protesting against any such demon-

stration, and after his return insisted on declining it. The demand of his old comrades and friends became so pressing that he at last consented to receive a procession on a designated evening a few days in advance, provided it should be spontaneous, without previous advertisement in newspapers. He expected a few hundred old soldiers and friends, and an affair of a few minutes. Instead he received the most impressive ovation which has ever been given to a private citizen of this country, perhaps not excepting those in times of the highest political excitement. The vast and broad procession of men who honored him passed hour after hour in front of the balcony on which he stood, while fifty or a hundred thousand crowded the street and square to witness and share in the demonstration. At midnight that night he said to me: "Well, it is over now, and I hope I can be quiet hereafter." But an American with such a hold on the hearts of people cannot be quiet.

There was no man in America, up to the day of his death, to whom so many of his fellow-citizens were attached by ties of affection and respect. There was what men call a magnetism about him which won all hearts. To politicians such a man, honest and unapproachable, is always a subject of apprehension. Party politicians, Democrats as well as Republicans, feared him as a possible rival or opponent. He received no favors from either, and to his death owed no gratitude to either party or any of their leaders. He was as carefully neglected by one as by the other, except when his great personal influence was wanted in a political campaign.

He established his residence, known as Maywood, on Orange Mountain, in New Jersey, where he built a house, and brought around him treasures of literature and art, memorials of faithful friends, of far travel, of scenes in his life which were pleasant to remember. Conspicuous in his own room was a shining mass of the long black hair of the horse Dan Webster, faithful among the faithful on a score of battle-fields.

In 1877 he was elected Governor of New Jersey. Had it been possible for Democratic party politicians to control the nomination he would not have been selected. His administration was eminently successful, rich in benefit to the educational, industrial, and judicial systems of the State, and wholly free from partisanship. And here it may be added that his experience had taught him to recognize the party politician whenever he came in contact with one, and to estimate him at his precise worth. He had accepted the governorship, urged on him, as an opportunity of doing good service to his State; but he was glad when the end of his term of office came. He had resolved to pass the remainder of his life as a private citizen. During its later years he went abroad several times, to Europe, Egypt, and the Holy Land, enjoying travel and study and the pleasure of warm social intercourse with many of the most distinguished soldiers, statesmen, and scholars of various countries, who were his correspondents and friends. His ample knowledge of modern languages made him at home in all countries, and enabled him to accumulate stores of information. He was thoroughly familiar with the progress of political as well as military thought and events in Europe and at home.

In the autumn of 1885 he had several severe attacks of pain in the region of the heart. After one of these he yielded to the advice of his excellent physician and remained at home, resting for some days. On the afternoon of Oct. 28 he drove out with his daughter, and passed the evening in pleasant conversation with his family. Towards eleven o'clock, after the evening prayers which were the family custom, he went to his working-room, wrote for a brief time, and then went to bed, taking, as he generally did, a book, which he read for a while. A sharp attack of the same acute pain suddenly seized him. The physician summoned to his side administered remedies, but the agony continued. He left his bed for a large chair in which he sat. No expression of suffering escaped him. On the contrary, he spoke only cheerfully and pleasantly to the servants whom he was sorry to call up, and to his wife and daughter, to whom he once in a while addressed a bright word of affection. About three o'clock in the morning he looked towards Mrs. McClellan and said in a low voice to the physician, "Tell her I am better now." The next moment his head rested on the chair-back and the good soldier was gone. The rewards which are withheld here, whether by reason of the malice of enemies or the neglect of friends, are of no account there.

His funeral was, in accordance with his own wishes often expressed, that of a private citizen. His body was brought to New York to my house, in which he had always been at home. While thousands of citizens filled the neighboring streets, he lay life-like, and around him stood a group of great men. The commanders of the opposing armies which had met at Yorktown and in the Peninsular campaign were both there—one living, the other dead. Strong men, generals, old soldiers of many battle-fields, his comrades and his foes, looked at his calm face. I have never seen, never expect to see again, such a scene, so many stout men in tears. Such eyes shed tears only for the great and good.

Then followed the simple services in the Madison Square Presbyterian Church, of which he had been a member until he became a ruling elder in the church at Orange. From the church he was carried to Trenton. Great throngs awaited the arrival of the train at the station and crowded the streets through which the procession passed for two miles. Thousands of silent mourners were assembled in the cemetery. His grave was in his private plot, on a hill overlooking the flow of the Delaware. A clergyman, one who loved him, said the last words of faith and hope as he was laid in the grave. So we buried him.

Most public men live two lives—the one that which the people see, the other that which none see unless it be a few intimate friends and companions of hours of freedom. McClellan, the soldier and patriot, is well known to the people, has been diversely judged by them according to the amount of correct information they have received, and according to those prejudices of political and other associations which affect all our opinions of public men of our own time.

Whatever be their judgment of the soldier and statesman, few if any

outside of the circle of his intimate friends have had any idea of the real man. Public men are too often measured by the familiar standards of public life. He was a man such as we seldom know. His experiences in life were varied. Educated as a soldier, he had devoted his life to his profession, and was one of the most accomplished military scholars of the world. His military library was large, in various languages, always increasing, every book thoroughly studied. He continued these studies faithfully to his death. Military operations in every part of the world commanded his close observation. He supplied himself with maps and all information in current literature, followed movements of armies, kept himself familiar with every phase of campaigns, whether in Europe, in Afghanistan, in Egypt, or in South Africa.

While this was his professional study, he occupied himself with almost equally thorough study of subjects very remote from military matters. He was a general student of the literature of the world. He read freely most of the languages of Europe, and kept up with the progress of thought and discussion in history, philosophy, and art. He was especially interested in archæology, and, having all his life retained and used his knowledge of ancient languages, found abundant delight in reading archæologic publications and in following the work of explorers. In all departments of scholarly reading he was constant and unwearying, and he never forgot what he had once learned. Fitted by his attainments for the society of the learned, he had the marked characteristic of the true scholar—the desire to know more, and therefore the habit of seeking instead of offering information. Few suspected his mastery of subjects on which he only asked questions when thrown in contact with recognized masters. In general conversation he more frequently sought information than gave it; but when drawn out to give it his expression was concise, vigorous, clear. His extended knowledge of ancient and modern languages made him master of his own. His public papers are models of pure style. His habit of writing was swift, and he never hesitated for the precise word to express the exact shade of meaning he intended. His despatch-books, containing the autograph originals of his despatches during the war, are marvels, since, with whatever haste he wrote, he wrote without erasure or alteration on subjects where each word was of vital importance.

That his life was one of constant occupation may be judged from what has been said. He had no idle hours—for those cannot be called idle which were given to social duties and the enjoyments of that home life whose beauty and happiness were perfect. His wife and children were his companions, and a perpetual sunshine was in the household. He was full of cheer, life, vigor, always ready for whatever would make any one of them happy.

And this leads me to say that of all men I have ever known McClellan was the most unselfish. Neither in his public life nor in his private life did he ever seek anything for himself. He was constantly doing something for some one else; always seeking to do good, confer pleasure, relieve sorrow, gratify a whim, do something for another. He had his own

amusements, but in those he sought the good of others. He had devoted a great deal of attention to ceramic art, and had collected many fine examples. He was an excellent judge of genuineness of specimens. But his love of "old china" was not for mere pleasure—it was for historical and industrial considerations; and New Jersey owes him a vastly larger debt than she knows for the great advance made in her pottery productions through his special personal efforts while and after he was governor of that State. In his elegant home, with ample table furniture of old historic porcelains, gathered with admirable judgment and taste in his European trips, he was especially proud of, and fond of using and showing, beautiful services made at Trenton in potteries which he often visited, and to whose advancement he had, while governor and afterward, directed earnest attention.

The personal affection which existed between McClellan and the soldiers of the Army of the Potomac is historical. It grew with years on both sides. On his it was a marked trait of his character. He would make great sacrifices of his own pleasure and comfort to render a service to any one of them. They were a vast family, and not a few of them came to him for aid in distress. None came in vain.

His charity was abundant. He sympathized with every one who was in trouble or sorrow; and his sympathy was practical and useful, for his person and his purse were devoted to its uses. An Irish servant in a New York house saw her brother's name in the list of killed at Antietam, and started off forthwith to find his grave. When she came back she told her story to the family. She found her way to the battle-field, and after a while to the graves where some one told her the men of her brother's regiment were buried. It was a lonesome place above ground then, for the army had moved away. She was searching among the graves for a familiar name on the stakes, when she saw, riding down the road which passed at some distance from the burial place, what she called a lot of soldiers on horseback. When they came abreast of her the leader, who was a little in advance, called a halt, sprang to the ground, and walked across the open field to her. "What are you looking for, my good woman?" he said. She told him. "What was your brother's regiment?" She answered. "You are only one of thousands who want to know to-day where their dead are lying here," he said. "I hope you will find your brother's grave. Don't mourn too much for him. He died a soldier's death." Then, turning, he called, "Orderly!" A soldier came. "Stay with this woman and help her find her brother's grave. Report to me this evening." And he went back, remounted, and the company rode on at a gallop. After a while the orderly found the grave, and she knelt there and prayed. Then she asked the soldier: "Who was that gentleman that told you to help me?" "That?" said the orderly. "Why, didn't you know him? That was 'Little Mac.'" "God bless him! I said," was the end of her story. Innumerable like prayers of grateful souls of men and women, with those words, "God bless him!" have "battered the gates of heaven."

It is surely unnecessary to say that he was a gentleman in every sense of the word. In social life he was perfectly simple in his manner, wholly unaffected, always genial, having rare conversational powers with all classes of persons, devoutly respectful to ladies. This deference to the female sex was a marked characteristic. I note an illustration of it which I find in many of his private letters, some in this volume. When at the head of the army, and occupying a position only second to the President, he received thousands of visitors who came from mere curiosity, introduced by senators or others, to see the young general. In mentioning such visits he invariably says that he "was presented to the ladies"—never uses what would have been a perfectly correct expression under the circumstances: "the ladies were presented to me."

In person McClellan was five feet nine inches tall, with great breadth of shoulders and solid, not superfluous, muscle. He measured forty-five inches around the chest. His physical strength in his younger life was very great. He seldom exerted it in later years. He contracted disease in the Mexican war which never wholly left him, and which doubtless somewhat impaired his strength. But in 1863 I have seen him bend a quarter-dollar over the end of his thumb by pressure between the first and second finger of his hand. That same evening we were sitting together, three, one of whom was a distinguished officer who weighed over two hundred and fifty. "They tell me, general," said I, "that McClellan can throw you over his head." "So they say," was the somewhat uncertain response. McClellan sprang from his chair and crossed the room rapidly with hands stretched out to seize the giant. "Let me alone, general!" he exclaimed—"let me alone! He can do it—he has done it. He can toss me in his arms like a baby." To the very last day of his life his step was quick, firm, elastic, the expression of that uniform cheerfulness, buoyancy, and enjoyment of life which he possessed and which he always communicated to those around him. I think I shall be understood in saying that his physical bearing was such that of all men he was the very last with whom those who knew him could connect any thought of death.

I have left to the last to speak of the controlling feature of McClellan's character and life. His religion was deep, earnest, practical; not vague or ill-defined to himself or others, not obtrusive, but outspoken when occasion required, and, when outspoken, frank and hearty. For it was part and parcel of his soul. 'I must use brief words, and I seek to make them distinct, in defining his creed, which was clear as crystal, more steadfast than the hills—the faith once delivered to the saints in its pure simplicity. With his intellectual powers, which were of the highest, and with his heart, which was supremely gentle, as trustful all his life as any child's, he was servant and follower of Jesus Christ, in whom he believed as God, of God.

In all his life, public and private, every purpose was formed, every act done in the light of that faith. It was this which not only produced in him that stainless purity of walk and conversation which all who knew him

recognized, but also gave him strength for all the great works of a great life. It was this which created that magnetic power so often spoken of, won to him that marvellous devotion of his soldiers, made all who knew him regard him with affection, those who knew him best love him most.

Out of the private correspondence which has come into my hands I have selected, and venture to make public here, two letters. These, better than anything I can say, will serve to open, for those who only knew him as a public man, a view of that inner life—his real life—which he lived among his familiar friends :

"NEW YORK, Aug. 18, 1879.

"MY DEAR GENERAL: Passing through South Street I saw a magnificent yacht-like ship, apparently new, called the *Gen. McClellan*. You have probably seen her. If not, she deserves a visit. I am sure you are tired of being governor or anything else, for, no matter what the title be, the result is always the same—work, work unceasingly. Now, suppose we gather our household gods and sail away in this good ship, until we come to 'the land where it is always afternoon'? This would be better than Orange Mountain or the salt sea of Long Island.

"With kind regards to Mrs. McClellan, believe me, yours,

"S. L. M. BARLOW.

"Gen. McCLELLAN."

ORANGE, Sept. 3, 1879.

MY DEAR SAM: Your welcome note of the 18th Aug. reached me when on the point of starting off for a trip from home. I was *very* glad to see those "leaning-back" characters once more.

Some few years ago I saw—near Mr. Alsop's office—a ship named for me, probably the same you saw the other day. I fancy, Sam, that we will never reach that "land where it is always afternoon" in any ship built by mortal hands. Our fate is to work, and still to work, as long as there is any work left in us; and I do not doubt that it is best. For I can't help thinking that, when we reach that other and far better land, we shall still have work to do throughout the long ages, only we will then see, as we go on, that it is all done for the Master and under His own eye; and we will like it, and never grow weary of it, as we often do here when we don't clearly see to what end we are working, and our work brings us in contact with all sorts of men and things not pleasant to rub against. I suppose that the more we work here the better we shall be trained for that other work, which, after all, is the great end towards which we move, or ought to be moving.

Well, I did not start out to sermonize, but somehow or other your letter started my thoughts in that direction. I *would* like to take the "belongings" and sail for that quiet land; but we will have to wait some little time yet, and I suppose each one will reach it alone, and the first arrived wait for the others.

I hear that Elsie is to leave you in October. Is it possible that time can fly so rapidly? Before many years May will perhaps leave us; and just now we are getting ready to send Max to boarding-school—an awful business, as you can tell from your own experience in sending Pete to Dr. Coit's. I think this scattering of children is the worst wrench we get down here; but there is nothing to be done but do the best for them as we understand it, and to thank God that they don't and can't feel it as we do.

What changes since we first crossed the Atlantic together—*how* many years ago? What a mess in politics! I am trying to take the least pos-

sible interest in such matters, as the only way to keep one's temper. Mrs. McClellan unites with me in love to Mrs. Barlow, Elsie, and yourself. And I am always your friend,

GEO. B. MCCLELLAN.

S. L. M. B.

In editing this volume for the press I have tried to do that which my friend would approve. The discretion which he gave me was ample. I have exercised it by omissions, not by changes. Of course his work was unfinished when he left it. Living prepared for the call whenever it might come, serving God as he had served his country, always ready for whatever command he might receive, it is nevertheless certain that, when the order came to go to duty in another life, he was not expecting it.

In writing his memoirs he had made no haste to complete them. Probably had he lived to extreme old age there would still have been much to be written. For years after the civil war he declined to write anything about it. He had no anxieties for himself and his own reputation. An abiding faith in time and the calm judgment of his country kept him from any care about the misstatements, misrepresentations, and falsehoods of which he, more perhaps than any American who had lived before him, excepting Washington, had been made the subject. Besides, he always gave less thought to himself and his own reputation than any man I ever knew or heard of. He was a man of very deep feeling, with the passions of all ardent souls; but so absolute had become his habitual self-control and subjection of all passionate resentment, so complete the self-abnegation which characterized him, I can affirm with certainty that he always felt more sorrow for the man who maligned him than for himself. Once when I showed him a slander, a pure fabrication, which had been published on the authority of Gen. Burnside, he read it, laid down the magazine with a quiet laugh, said, "Poor Burn! he didn't know what he was saying," and, after a few kindly words about his old friend, dropped the subject. In vain was he urged to publish the demonstrations he possessed of the falsehood of this and similar attacks.

His happiness in life consisted in what he was always doing for others, without thought of self. As he had never sought position, command, or promotion, so he never asked his countrymen to give him honor or thanks.

It was only when I urged on him that his children had a right to possess his own story that he took the subject into consideration. Afterward, while in Europe, he began to write out personal reminiscences, which from time to time he continued after his return to America. A fire destroyed all his manuscript. In 1881 he resumed the work. He did not labor at it continuously, with intent to produce a book, but wrote as the humor seized him.

His Report, made in 1863, but held back by the War Department for some months, had been full, accurate, and exhaustive. It was published in 1864. No statement in it has ever been controverted. This Report did not include any accounts of his personal relations to the civilians who

directed the course of political events and misdirected military operations during the first two years of the war. These accounts he wrote, accompanying them with letters, despatches, documents—whatever might throw light on history. He rewrote and extended a large part of the military history which his Report had given in brief, and from time to time inserted pages of manuscript here and there in those parts of it which he had not rewritten. Thus as years passed he was extending and annotating a history, at all times complete in itself as a narrative; and, however long he had lived, would probably have enriched it from year to year with more and more of interesting material. His sudden death interrupted the progress of his work. When I came to examine the collected and arranged papers which he entrusted to me, verbally while living, and by his last will, I found not only the narrative which I have styled MCCLELLAN'S OWN STORY, but sufficient illustrative and explanatory documents, letters, and despatches to form several volumes.

He had not written with reference to publication. It was expressly for his children that he was preparing his memoirs, and there was a great deal in them which was intended solely for their eyes. A century hence every word, perhaps, might be interesting to those who enjoy personal memoirs, but, as a matter of course, it has been my duty to withhold such portions as I think he would not have published now. I have exercised my discretion in reserving for future publication much of the material he had arranged, which would now be valuable, and doubtless acceptable, but would have extended this volume to a series of two or three. All the foot-notes in the volume are mine.

Another class of material came into my hands. McClellan had been married only a few months before the outbreak of the war. Not the least sacrifice which he made in entering the service was the breaking up of the home—his first home—in which he had found the first happiness of a laborious life. Sometimes during his public service Mrs. McClellan was able to be with him, especially while he was in Washington. When they were separated he found his only rest and refreshment in writing to her. To no other person in the world did he open his whole soul. The perfection of their love, the absolute confidence which he reposed, and wisely reposed, in her, made his letters not only graphic accounts of daily events, great and small, but an exposure of his inmost feelings. I found among his papers some extracts from these letters, which he had made to aid him in writing his memoirs; but the letters were supposed to have vanished in the fire. When they were discovered, carefully sealed for the one only person to whom they belonged, I asked for fuller extracts. I confess that I hesitated very much about giving any part of these letters, written in the most sacred confidence of life, to the public eye. Others advised that, as he belonged to his country, and innumerable citizens and soldiers loved him with devout affection, they could well be allowed, had indeed a right, to read portions of these letters which reveal McClellan the man, as his narrative shows McClellan the soldier.

By far the larger portion of the letters, and of every letter, belongs

to that confidence which not even death affects. In determining what parts may and what may not be published I have been influenced by the wish to present to his fellow-citizens who honored him, and his soldiers who loved him, some of that view of his character which those nearest to him always had ; and I have done this with the guiding trust that he will approve what I have done when I again meet him.

W. C. PRIME.

AUGUST 10, 1886.

MCCLELLAN'S OWN STORY

November 8, 1881.

The labor of years in the preparation of my memoirs having been destroyed by fire, it remains to recommence the tedious work and replace the loss as best I may. Fortunately my original papers are preserved. I have no present intention of publishing anything during my lifetime, but desire to leave, for the use of my children, my own account of the great events in which it was my fortune to take part. Therefore, should I live to complete my work, it will probably be found too voluminous for publication, and I anticipate the necessity of a judicious pruning to fit it for the public use.

I have thus far abstained from any public reply to the various criticisms and misrepresentations of which I have been the subject, and shall probably preserve the same attitude during the remainder of my life. Certainly, up to within a brief period, party feeling has run so high that the pathway for the truth has been well-nigh closed, and too many have preferred to accept blindly whatever was most agreeable to their prejudices, rather than to examine facts.

Moreover, during the civil war I never sought rank nor command. Whatever of that nature came to me came by force of circumstances and with no effort of my own. In the performance of the duties thus thrown upon me, I can with a clear conscience say that I never thought of myself or of my own interests, but that I steadily pursued the course which commended itself to me as best serving the true interests of my country, and of the gallant troops whom I had the honor to command.

I have, therefore, been able to maintain a calm front under abuse, and—while far from claiming immunity from error—have remained satisfied with the conviction that, after my death at least, my countrymen will recognize the fact that I loyally served my country in its darkest hour; and that others, who during their lifetimes have been more favored than myself, would probably have done no better, under the circumstances which surrounded me, when, twice at least, I saved the capital, once created and once reorganized a great army.

McCLELLAN'S OWN STORY.

CHAPTER I.

Causes of the war—Principles of the Union—State-rights and secession—Slavery—Immediate and gradual emancipation—Douglas and Lincoln—War imminent—The South responsible—A slander refuted—McClellan always for the Union—Enters the service—Made major-general of volunteers in Ohio.

WHEN the occurrences at Fort Sumter in April, 1861, aroused the nation to some appreciation of the gravity of the situation, I was engaged in civil life as president of the Eastern Division of the Ohio and Mississippi Railroad, having resigned my commission as a captain of cavalry in January, 1857. My residence was then in Cincinnati, and the fact that I had been in the army threw me in contact with the leading men of the State. My old army associations had placed me in intimate relations with many Southern men, and I had travelled much in the South, so that I was, perhaps, better prepared to weigh the situation than the majority of Northern men. So strongly was I convinced that war would ensue that when, in the autumn of 1860, I leased a house in Cincinnati for the term of three years, I insisted upon a clause in the lease releasing me from the obligation in the event of war.

The general current of events during the winter, and many special instances of outrage or insult offered to unoffending Northern travellers in the Southwest (coming to my knowledge as a railway official), reduced this impression to a certainty in my mind, even before the firing upon Sumter.

After all that has been said and written upon the subject, I suppose none now doubt that slavery was the real knot of the question and the underlying cause of the war. It is now easy to perceive how the war might have been avoided if for two or

three generations back all the men of both sections had been eminently wise, calm, unselfish, and patriotic. But with men as they are, it would be difficult indeed to indicate how a permanent pacific solution could have been reached. It is no doubt true that events were precipitated, perhaps rendered inevitable, by the violent course of a comparatively small number of men, on both sides of the line, during the thirty years preceding the war.

But it is the distinct lesson of history that this is always so ; that the great crises in the world's history are induced by the words and actions of a few earnest or violent men, who stir up the masses and induce them blindly to follow their lead, whether for good or evil. As a rule the masses of civilized men, if left to themselves, are not prone to disturb the existing order of things or to resort to violent measures, unless suffering under intense evils which come home to each man individually and affect either his personal safety or personal possessions and prosperity ; and even in such cases spontaneous uprisings of the masses are rare.

In our own case the people of the two sections did not understand each other before the war, and probably neither section regarded the other as seriously in earnest. The wide difference existing in social organization and habits had much to do with this.

In the South the habit of carrying, and using on slight provocation, deadly weapons, the sparse settlement of the country, the idle and reckless habits of the majority of the illiterate whites, the self-assertion natural to the dominant race in a slave-holding country, all conspired to impress them with an ill-founded assumption of superior worth and courage over the industrious, peaceful, law-abiding Northerners. On the other hand, the men of the North had become somewhat habituated to the boastful assertions too common among the Southerners, and had learned to believe that no real purpose of using force lay concealed beneath their violent language. Both were mistaken. The Southerner, with all his gasconading, was earnest in his intention to fight to the last for slavery and the right of secession. The peaceful Northerner, unaccustomed to personal warfare and prone to submit his disputes to the regular ordeal of law, was ready to lay down his life for the cause of the Union.

More gallant foes never met on the field of battle than these men of the same race, who had so long lived under the ample folds of the same flag ; more desperate battles were never fought than those now about to occur. The military virtues of patriotism, patience, endurance, self-abnegation, and heroism were about to receive their most striking illustrations.

In judging the motives of men at this great crisis it must be remembered that the vast majority of Southern men had been educated in the doctrine of secession and of extreme State-rights—which is, that allegiance was due first to the State, next to the general government, and that the State when it entered the Union retained the right to withdraw at will ; while in the North the doctrine was generally held that allegiance to the general government was paramount and the Union indissoluble. The masses on each side were honest in their belief as to the justice of their cause. Their honesty and sincerity were proved by the sacrifices they made, by the earnestness with which so many devout Christians on both sides confidently relied upon the aid of God in their hour of trial, and by the readiness with which so many brave men laid down their lives on the field of battle.

When the generation which took part in this contest shall have passed away, and the question can be regarded in the cold light of dispassionate historical and philosophical inquiry, it will be clearly seen that in this case also history has repeated itself, and that the truth lay midway between the extreme positions assumed by the controlling spirits at the time. The right of secession would virtually have carried us back to the old Confederacy, which proved so weak from lack of cohesion between its parts and of the necessary force in the executive. The tendency of Northern Republicans was towards a centralized power, under which the autocracy of the States would disappear.

It is impossible for any government to recognize the right of secession unless its assertion is supported by such overwhelming force as to render opposition entirely hopeless, and thus practically convert rebellion into successful revolution. There can be no stability, no protection of person and property, no good government, no power to put down disorder at home or to resist oppression from without, under any other principle.

On the other hand, in a country so vast as ours, with such

great differences of topography and of climate, with a population so numerous and derived from such a variety of sources, and, in consequence of all this, such diversities of habits, local laws, and material interests, it is impossible for a centralized government to legislate satisfactorily for all the domestic concerns of the various parts of the Union.

The only safe policy is that the general government be strictly confined to the general powers and duties vested in it by the old Constitution, while the individual States preserve all the sovereign rights and powers retained by them when the constitutional compact was formed.

As a corollary from this I am convinced that no State can be deprived of any of these retained rights, powers, and duties without its own consent; and that the power of amending the Constitution was intended to apply only to amendments affecting the manner of carrying into effect the original provisions of the Constitution, but not to enable the general government to seize new power at the expense of any unwilling State.

A strict adherence in practice to this theory presents, in my opinion, the only possibility of the permanent maintenance of our Union throughout the long years of the future.

The old Southern doctrine of extreme State-rights, including that of secession, would reduce the Union to a mere rope of sand, and would completely paralyze the general government, rendering it an object of just contempt at home and abroad.

The doctrine of centralization, if carried to its legitimate conclusions, in substituting the legislation of the general government for that of the States in regard to the local and domestic affairs of the people, would soon cause so much discontent and suffering as to result in a resort to secession as the only practical remedy. And in this case the Union could only be maintained by the superior force of a strong military central government, thus rendering the Union valueless for its great object of securing the liberties of the people.

In the course of my narrative the fact will appear—a fact well known to all who intelligently followed the events of the time—that, at the beginning of the great civil war, the general government was powerless, both in the East and West, to maintain its rights and vindicate its authority, and that the means to accomplish these vital ends were furnished by the individual States,

acting in their capacity as sovereigns. The history of that period is the best possible vindication of the Northern doctrine of State-rights.

And no impartial observer of the events of the war can fail to see that all the subsequent violations of the Constitution and of the rights of the loyal States, by the general government, were not only wholly unnecessary but positively pernicious at the time. The safety of the republic at no time during the war required or justified any departure from the provisions of the Constitution. That great instrument was broad enough to cover even the necessities of that most eventful period. The loyalty of the great masses of the Northern people was so marked and so strong that they could be trusted far more than most of the selfish servants whom a minority had placed in power. The happiest condition of affairs for us would no doubt be found in a return to the situation before the war, when the action of the general government, being strictly confined to its legitimate purposes, was so little felt by individual citizens that they almost forgot its existence, and were almost unaware that there was any other government in the land than those of the States and municipalities.

Soon after my arrival in Washington in 1861 I had several interviews with prominent abolitionists—of whom Senator Sumner was one—on the subject of slavery. I invariably took the ground that I was thoroughly opposed to slavery, regarding it as a great evil, especially to the whites of the South, but that in my opinion no sweeping measure of emancipation should be carried out, unless accompanied by arrangements providing for the new relations between employers and employed, carefully guarding the rights and interests of both ; and that were such a measure framed to my satisfaction I would cordially support it. Mr. Sumner replied—others also agreed with him—that such points did not concern us, and that all that must be left to take care of itself. My reply was that no real statesman could ever contemplate so sweeping and serious a measure as sudden and general emancipation without looking to the future and providing for its consequences ; that four and a half millions of uneducated slaves should not suddenly be manumitted without due precautions taken both to protect them and to guard against them ; that just there was the point where we differed radically and probably irreconcilably.

My own view was that emancipation should be accomplished gradually, and that the negroes should be fitted for it by certain preparatory steps in the way of education, recognition of the rights of family and marriage, prohibition against selling them without their own consent, the freedom of those born after a certain date, etc. I was always prepared to make it one of the essential conditions of peace that slavery should be abolished within a fixed and reasonable period. Had the arrangements of the terms of peace been in my hands I should certainly have insisted on this.

During the autumn of 1861, after arriving in Washington, I discontinued the practice of returning fugitive slaves to their owners.

In Western Virginia, after Pegram's surrender, when I had been directed to parole the prisoners, I collected the large number of negro slaves captured with their masters, and gave them their choice as to returning with the latter, remaining in camp under pay as laborers, or going North. With one or two exceptions they decided to return with their masters. From that time forward I never returned a negro slave to his master, although many such requisitions were made on me. I followed the principle that there could be no slave in my camp.

On the Peninsula I not only received all negroes who came to the camps, but (especially when on the James river) frequently sent out parties to bring in negroes, because I required them for certain work around the camps and depots too severe for white men in that climate. They were employed upon police work, loading and unloading transports, etc., and sometimes upon entrenchments. They were fed and received some small wages. As a rule much strictness was necessary to make them work; they supposed that in leaving their masters they left all labor behind them, and that they would be clothed, fed, and allowed to live in idleness in the North. That was their only idea of liberty. It was very clear that they were entirely unfit for sudden emancipation and the reception of the electoral franchise, and should have been gradually prepared for it.

While on this subject I must say that, although I was a strong Democrat of the Stephen A. Douglas school, I had no personal political ambition. I knew nothing about "practical politics," had never even voted except for Douglas, and during the whole

period of my command I never did or wrote anything, or abstained from doing or writing anything, in view of its political effect upon myself. My ambition was fully gratified by the possession of the command of the army, and, so long as I held that, nothing would have induced me to give it up for the Presidency. Whenever I wrote anything of a political nature it was only with the hope of doing something towards the maintenance of those political principles which I honestly thought should control the conduct of the war. In fact, I sacrificed my own interests rather than acquiesce in what I thought wrong or impolitic. The President and his advisers made a great mistake in supposing that I desired political advancement.

Many of the Democratic leaders did me great harm by using my name for party purposes without my knowledge or consent; and, without intending it, probably did more than my armed enemies in the way of ruining my military career by giving the administration some reason to suppose that in the event of military success I might prove a dangerous political rival.

Regarding, as I did, the restoration of the Union and preservation of the national life to be the great object of the war, I would, no doubt, have acquiesced in any honorable measure absolutely necessary to bring about the desired result, even to the forcible and general abolition of slavery, if found to be a military necessity. I recognized the fact that as the Confederate States had chosen to resort to the arbitrament of arms, they must abide by the logical consequences of the stern laws of war. But, as I always believed that we should fight to bring them back into the Union, and should treat them as members of the Union when so brought back, I held that it was a matter of sound policy to do nothing likely to render ultimate reconciliation and harmony impossible, unless such a course were imperative to secure military success. Nor do I now believe that my ideas were quixotic or impracticable.

Since the war I have met many of my late antagonists, and have found none who entertained any personal enmity against me. While acknowledging, with Lee and other of their generals, that they feared me more than any of the Northern generals, and that I had struck them harder blows when in the full prime of their strength, they have all said that I fought them like a gen-

tleman and in an honorable way, and that they felt nothing but respect for me.

I remember very well, when riding over the field of South Mountain, that, passing by a severely wounded Confederate officer, I dismounted and spoke with him, asking whether I could do anything to relieve him. He was a lieutenant-colonel of a South Carolina regiment, and asked me if I was Gen. McClellan; and when I said that I was Gen. McClellan, he grasped my hand and told me that he was perfectly willing to be wounded and a prisoner for the sake of taking by the hand one whom all the Confederates so honored and admired. Such things happened to me not unfrequently, and I confess that it gave me no little pleasure to find that my antagonists shared the feelings of my own men for me.

To revert to politics for a moment: When residing in Chicago I knew Mr. Stephen A. Douglas quite well. During his campaign for the senatorship against Mr. Lincoln they were on one occasion to hold a joint discussion at Bloomington, and, as my business called me in that direction, I invited Mr. Douglas to accompany me in my private car. We started late in the evening, and Mr. Douglas brought with him a number of his political henchmen, with whom he was up all night. We reached Bloomington early in the afternoon of the next day, and about half an hour before arriving I warned Mr. Douglas, who had continued his amusements up to that time, not having slept at all. I dreaded a failure in the discussion about to take place, for the Little Giant certainly had had no opportunity of thinking of the subject of the debate, and did not seem to be in fit condition to carry it on. Not that he was intoxicated, but looking unkempt and sleepy. He, however, retired to my private cabin, and soon emerged perfectly fresh and ready for the work before him; so much so that I thought his speech of that day his best during the campaign.

Mr. Lincoln entertained a very high respect for Mr. Douglas's powers, and no doubt had the latter survived he would have exercised a great and most favorable influence upon Mr. Lincoln, as well as upon the Democratic party of the North. His death was a severe blow to the country. He would, in all probability, have been able to control the more flighty leaders of the Northwestern Democracy, and have kept the party in the eyes of

the world, as its masses really were, united in a hearty support of the war.

While giving due weight to all said or done by the ultra abolitionists of the North, I hold the South directly accountable for the war. If the election of Mr. Lincoln meant a more determined attack upon slavery, they of the South were responsible for the result, in consequence of their desertion of Mr. Douglas and the resulting rupture of the Democratic party. Even after that, if they had chosen to draw near the Northern Democrats again, seeking their remedy and protection within the Union, the Constitution, and the laws, they would have retained the right on their side. If left to their own cool judgment it is probable that the majority of the Southern whites would have realized that slavery could not exist much longer, and that their wisest course was to recognize that fact, consent that it should not be extended beyond its existing limits, and provide for its gradual extinction. But, for various reasons, more reckless counsels prevailed. The Southern States rallied to the support of their peculiar institution, declared it to be a holy ordinance, demanded that it might be extended over the Territories, and bitterly opposed the idea that general manumission should be provided for in any form. Thus a state of feeling arose, more particularly in the South, which could only be quieted by the drastic methods of war.

In the early part of 1861, as has already been stated, it became almost impossible for any Northern man to travel in the Southwest without being subjected to gross insults or to personal maltreatment; this conduct soon produced a counter irritation, and, as for myself, I confess that ere long I came to the conclusion that there was but one way to put an end to such proceedings, and that the sooner we entered upon that way the better it would be. When Sumter was fired upon there was no longer room for discussion, and the question was narrowed to the issue of the life of the Union and the honor of the flag. For men who thought as I did there was but one course open.

It was clear that, even if a peaceable separation were arranged, we would soon come to blows on some secondary issue, such as boundaries, the division of public property, the slavery question on the borders, the free navigation of the Mississippi, the territorial domain, etc., etc., and in that view it was better

to throw everything else to one side and fight upon the main underlying issue—the preservation of the Union and the observance of the laws of the general government.

It is perhaps hardly worth while to notice here any of those unfounded slanders which some papers uttered concerning me—that is, the statement that at the outbreak of the war I entertained offers to enter the Southern service. I need only say that there was not the shadow of a foundation for this. The leading men on the Southern side knew perfectly well that of all men I would be the last to waver in my allegiance to the general government and its flag.

At no period, either before or after the war broke out, did any one suggest to me, either directly or indirectly, the idea of my taking part with the South. No one ever made me any offer to join the rebel service; no one ever suggested the possibility of my dreaming of espousing that side. I never, in any manner, intimated to any one that it would be possible for me to take any other side than that of the general government and the Union, nor did such a thought ever pass through my mind. I always stated distinctly that, should the apprehended crisis arrive, I should stand by the Union and the general government. I make this record because there have been people so foolish as to believe the statements made by radical newspapers to the effect that I had offered my services to the secessionists. Those papers must have known their statements to be entirely false and void of foundation, when they made them for the sole purpose of serving party political ends.

The secession of South Carolina, Dec. 20, 1860, was closely followed by that of six other States, and on the 8th of Feb., 1861, the Southern Confederacy was formally proclaimed and its president elected. But, without even awaiting the organization of the new Confederate government, the seceding States seized all the unprotected United States arsenals and fortifications within their limits, together with all the arms, stores, and munitions of war they contained. Forts Moultrie and Sumter in Charleston harbor, Fort Pickens at Pensacola, and the fortresses at Key West and Tortugas in Florida were about the only forts within the seceded States which remained in the possession of the general government.

How soon the work of organizing and instructing troops be-

gan in the South will appear from the fact that as early as the 9th of Jan., 1861, an expedition for the relief of Fort Sumter was turned back by the fire of the Southern batteries near the entrance of Charleston harbor. About the same time the navy-yard at Pensacola was occupied by an armed force under Bragg, and the works at the mouth of the Mississippi garrisoned.

In brief, at least from the beginning of Jan., 1861, and probably in many cases yet earlier, the work of organizing, arming, and instructing troops began throughout the seceded States, and not improbably in such of the slaveholding States also as had not yet formally joined the movement of secession. As early as Feb. 18, Gen. Twiggs surrendered the forces under his command in Texas.

Meanwhile neither the general government nor the Northern States were doing anything to counteract this movement and meet the impending storm. Not only were there no additional troops raised, no steps taken to organize and arm the militia and volunteers, but, so far as the general government was concerned, the authorities seemed to dread even the semblance of a movement to reinforce the few forts still in their possession. The little regular army, scattered over the vast area of the West, was left without orders, and not even concentrated for self-defence, much less brought in where its services might be available against the active forces of the secessionists, as common prudence would have suggested, as early as the passage of the South Carolina ordinance of secession.

Such was the condition of affairs when Fort Sumter surrendered on the 14th of April, 1861. The general government and the Northern States were utterly unprepared for war; not a man enlisted, not a musket procured, not a cartridge made, not a piece of clothing or equipment provided, beyond those maintained during a state of profound and apparently permanent peace. The Southern States for nearly four months had been actively preparing for the eventuality they intended to force on, and had made no little headway in the collection of material, the organization and instruction of troops.

Moreover, on the breaking-out of hostilities they possessed another and very considerable advantage over the Northerners: that is to say, one of the results of the peculiar institution of the South was that the class of slaveholders, the highly educated

whites, had always composed an aristocracy, which furnished the social and political leaders to whom the poor whites were, as a rule, accustomed to defer, so that when the time arrived to raise troops the aristocratic class furnished officers always accustomed to control, and the poor whites furnished the mass of the private soldiers, always habituated to that deference to their leaders which under the new circumstances rapidly passed into obedience. Discipline was thus very easily established among them.

Among the Northern men there was little difficulty in establishing discipline when the officers were intelligent gentlemen; but, in the early part of the war particularly, it occurred that the officers were sometimes inferior in intelligence and education to the soldiers, and in these cases the establishment of discipline presented far greater difficulties.

Here let me say that, given good officers, there are no men in the world who admit of a more thorough and effective discipline than the native-born Americans of the North. Their intelligence soon shows them the absolute necessity of discipline in an army, and its advantages to all concerned; but the kind of discipline best adapted to them differs materially from that required by other races. Their fighting qualities are second to none in the world.

When the catastrophe occurred—the firing upon Fort Sumter—the excitement in Cincinnati and along the Ohio river was naturally intense. The formation of regiments began at once, and all who had military knowledge or experience were eagerly sought for, myself among others. I did what I could in the way of giving advice to those who sought it, and in allaying the excitement in Cincinnati. About this time I received telegrams from friends in New York informing me that the governor of that State desired to avail himself of my services; another from Gen. Robert Patterson, offering me the position of chief-engineer of the command of militia then organizing under his orders; and one from Gov. Curtin, of Pennsylvania, offering me the command of the Pennsylvania Reserves, afterwards given to McCall. I promptly arranged my business affairs so as to admit of a short absence, and started for Pennsylvania to see what was best to be done. At the request of several gentlemen of Cincinnati I stopped at Columbus to give Gov. Dennison some

information about the condition of affairs in Cincinnati, intending to remain only a few hours and then proceed to Harrisburg.

According to the then existing laws of Ohio the command of the militia and volunteers called out must be given to general officers of the existing militia establishment. The legislature being in session, the governor caused to be presented a bill permitting him to appoint, as major-general commanding, any resident of the State. This was intended for my benefit, was passed by both houses in a few hours, and the appointment offered to me the same day, the 23d of April, 1861. I at once accepted and without an hour's delay entered upon the performance of my duties, abandoning my intended trip to the East.

CHAPTER II.

Beginning of the war in the West—Apathy at Washington—Value of State governments—Incidents in organizing Western army—Kentucky—Campaign in Western Virginia—McClellan called to Washington.

AT the time of my appointment in Ohio we were cut off from direct communication with Washington in consequence of the unfortunate occurrences in Baltimore, and the attention of the national authorities was confined exclusively to the task of relieving the capital from danger and of securing its communications with the loyal States. We in the West were therefore left for a long time without orders, advice, money, or supplies of any kind, and it was clear that the different States must take care of themselves and provide their own means of defence.

At this critical juncture the value and vitality of the State governments was fully tested. Fortunately they proved equal to the emergency and saved the country. Any one who coolly and dispassionately reviews the occurrences of that exciting period must arrive at the conclusion that, in a country so large as ours, the safety of the nation imperatively demands the entire preservation of the rights and autonomy of the several States as secured by the original Constitution ; of course with the proviso that the vexed question of the right of secession has been for ever settled in the negative by the result of the civil war. The Eastern States were to a certain extent provided with arms, the material of war, and some tolerably organized and instructed militia regiments. Their prompt action saved the capital.

The Western States were almost entirely without the means of defence, but the governors (cordially supported by the legislatures) at once took steps to obtain by purchase and by contract, at home and abroad, the requisite arms, ammunition, clothing, camp equipage, etc. The supplies thus provided were often inferior in quality and insufficient in quantity, but they answered the purpose until better arrangements could be made.

In addition to the Ohio volunteers called for by the general government, the governor placed under my command twelve or thirteen regiments of State troops; and for several weeks I remained at Columbus, without a staff, working night and day at the organization of the entire Ohio contingent.

The condition of affairs in the West was not satisfactory or reassuring. We were entirely unprepared for war. It was already clear that Missouri was likely to be the scene of a serious struggle, and the attitude of Kentucky was very doubtful. The secessionists were gathering forces in Tennessee and upon the Mississippi river, as well as in Western Virginia, and many well-informed persons felt great anxiety in respect to the loyalty of large numbers of the inhabitants of southern Illinois, Indiana, and Ohio. In brief, our situation was difficult. We were surrounded by possible, or even probable, dangers; were without organization, arms, supplies, money, officers. We had no idea of the policy which the general government intended to pursue; we had no "head" to direct affairs. It fell to me, perhaps more than to any one person, to supply these pressing wants, and at this distance I may say that the task was not unsatisfactorily performed.

My civil career ended at this time, for from the evening when I received the appointment as major-general of the Ohio Volunteers all my thoughts and efforts were directed to my military duties. I never again went to the office of the Ohio and Mississippi Railroad, unless it may have been for a few minutes when my advice was needed on matters of importance. The owners of the road refused to accept my resignation for many months, until it was certain that I was inextricably involved in military affairs; but I drew no pay from them after I ceased to do the duty. The salary I gave up to re-enter the military service was ten thousand dollars per annum.

On the night of my appointment as major-general in Ohio I wrote a letter to Gen. Scott (probably directed to the adjutant-general) informing him of the fact, reporting for orders, giving all the details I possessed in regard to my command, the arms, etc., at my disposal, and asking for staff officers to assist me. This was sent by a special messenger, there being then no mail communication with Washington. Within a few days I sent by similar means another letter to the general, suggesting that

the Western States between the Alleghanies and the Mississippi be placed under one head ; stating that I intended bringing all the Ohio troops into one camp of instruction (Camp Dennison) ; asking for arms, funds, etc.; urging the necessity of artillery and cavalry ; renewing the request for staff officers ; suggesting a plan, or rather plans, of Western campaigns. It is possible that some of the ideas here mentioned as being in the second letter may have been in the first, or in another letter written soon after ; for about this time I wrote several letters to the headquarters at Washington. One movement that I suggested was in connection with the operations of the Eastern army then being assembled around Washington ; a movement up the valley of the Great Kanawha, and across the mountains upon Richmond or upon Staunton, as circumstances might render advisable. Another was a movement upon Nashville, and thence, in combination with the Eastern army, upon Chattanooga, Atlanta, Montgomery, Savannah, etc., etc. The importance of Eastern Tennessee, and of the railroad from Memphis through Chattanooga and Knoxville, was very early impressed upon my mind, and at a very early date brought before the Washington authorities. Fortunately, or unfortunately, they were too busy to think of the West, and these letters received little or no attention, so that we were allowed to go on pretty much as we pleased, with such means as the States could get possession of.

On the 13th of May, 1861, I received the order, dated May 3, forming the Department of the Ohio—consisting of the States of Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois—and giving the command to me. A short time afterwards were added to the department a small portion of Western Pennsylvania and that part of Western Virginia north of the Great Kanawha and west of the Greenbrier rivers. I was still left without a single instructed staff officer.

Capt. (afterwards Maj.-Gen.) Gordon Granger, U. S. Mounted Rifles, was sent to Ohio to muster in volunteers. I appointed him division inspector, and repeatedly applied for him as a member of my staff ; but these requests were constantly refused, and he was not permitted to retain the post of inspector. During the short time he was with me he rendered remarkable services. Capt. Lawrence Williams, 10th U. S. Infantry, was soon after ordered to Ohio as a mustering officer, and my application for him as an aide-de-camp was granted. He con-

tinued with me during the Western Virginia campaign, and until a short period after my arrival in Washington, when with great difficulty I procured for him the appointment of major in the 6th U. S. Cavalry. This much-abused officer always served me faithfully, and exhibited great gallantry in action. I was and am fully satisfied that he always behaved with thorough loyalty.

Soon after this Gen. Harney and Col. McKinstrey lent me Capt. Dickerson, A. A. Q. M. After much difficulty I succeeded in retaining him, and he proved to be a most valuable officer. Capt. Burns, A. C. S., happened to pass through Cincinnati unemployed, so that I detained him, and at last kept him permanently. Both this officer and Capt. Dickerson were more than once ordered away from me to less important functions, and it was with the utmost difficulty that I finally retained them. At a subsequent period, but before the Western Virginia campaign, Maj. Seth Williams was assigned to duty as adjutant-general of the department, Maj. R. B. Marcy as paymaster (subsequently assigned by me as chief of staff and inspector-general), Capt. Kingsbury as chief of ordnance.

During the first organization of the department my great difficulty was encountered from the unwillingness of the Washington authorities to give me any staff officers. I do not think they had an idea beyond their own safety, and consequently that of Washington; except the Blairs, who were naturally much interested in the State of Missouri, and Mr. Chase. As will be seen hereafter, Kentucky and West Virginia received a very small share of the attention of the functionaries in Washington.

In the course of May and June I made several tours of inspection through my command. Cairo was visited at an early day, and after a thorough inspection I gave the necessary orders for its defence, as well as that of Bird's Point, which I also visited. Cairo was then under the immediate command of Brig.-Gen. Prentiss, and, considering all the circumstances, the troops were in a remarkably satisfactory condition. The artillery, especially, had made very good progress under the instruction of Col. Wagner, a Hungarian officer, whom I had sent there for that object. I inspected also at Springfield (Ill.), Chicago, several points on the Illinois Central Railroad, several times at Indianapolis, Cleveland, and Columbus. Maj. Marcy also inspected the points left

unexamined by me. In connection with Gov. Dennison I had several meetings with the governors of the Northwestern States for the purpose of urging on military preparations.

During the period that elapsed from my assignment to the command in Ohio until I commenced sending troops to West Virginia, my time was fully occupied in expediting the organization and instruction of the troops, and in endeavoring to provide for their food, armament, and equipment. The difficulties arising from the apathy and contracted views of the authorities at Washington were very great, and could never have been overcome but for the zeal and intelligence of the governors of the Western States, foremost among whom was Gov. Dennison, of Ohio. It seemed that the Washington people had quite forgotten the existence of the West; certain it is that for a long time we were left entirely to our own resources, and it frequently became necessary to assume responsibilities not at all in accordance with the ordinary proprieties of a well-regulated service.

Gen. Scott and the other military authorities all this time refused to allow the organization of cavalry and artillery for my command, being clear that neither of these arms of service would be needed! With the exception of the "Michigan Battery" (Capt. Loomis), which was authorized by Gen. Wool during the time when communication with Washington was cut off, there was no battery in the United States service at my disposal for a long time. Upon my recommendation the governors of the States organized State batteries on their own responsibility. Finally three companies of the 4th U. S. Artillery, serving as infantry, arrived at Cincinnati *en route* to the East from Fort Randall. I at length received permission to retain them, and sent Capt. (afterwards Maj.-Gen.) George Getty, the commander of one of them, to Washington, with a letter for the general commanding, in which I repeated my wants in regard to artillery, and urged that the three companies should at once be mounted. The result was a tardy and reluctant consent that one of them, Capt. (afterwards Gen.) A. P. Howe's, should be mounted. But Gen. Scott expressed to Capt. Getty no little indignation that I should presume to make such a request, and, among other things, said: "I know more about artillery than Gen. McClellan does, and it is not for him to teach me." So

tedious were the movements of the Ordnance Bureau that Capt. Howe's battery was not mounted until after I left for West Virginia, and joined me there in a perfectly raw condition. Cavalry was absolutely refused, but the governors of the States complied with my request and organized a few companies, which were finally mustered into the United States service and proved very useful.

Soon after Gen. Patterson commenced his operations in the vicinity of Williamsport (when on the cars returning from Indianapolis, where I went to inspect some regiments of Indiana troops) I received from him a telegraphic despatch stating that he had largely superior forces in front of him, that he was in a critical condition and wanted assistance. I at once telegraphed and wrote to Gen. Scott what Gen. Patterson stated, and suggesting that I should move out, with all my disposable force, by the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad to Piedmont and beyond, and thus, in connection with Gen. Patterson, clear out the Shenandoah Valley. The reply to this was in substance, and as nearly as I remember in these very words: that "the region beyond Piedmont is not within Gen. McClellan's command. When his opinion is desired about matters there it will be asked for." After this encouraging reply I very carefully abstained from unnecessary communication with Washington. It may be remarked that my suggestion was not uncalled for, but directly induced by Gen. Patterson's official despatch to me; and, further, that if my suggestion had been adopted the result would have been that no "Bull Run No. 1" would have been fought.

I think it was during my absence on this very trip (to Indianapolis) that Grant came to Cincinnati to ask me, as an old acquaintance, to give him employment, or a place on my staff. Marcy or Seth Williams saw him and told him that if he would await my return, doubtless I would do something for him; but before I got back he was telegraphed that he could have a regiment in Illinois, and at once returned thither, so that I did not see him. This was his good luck; for had I been there I would no doubt have given him a place on my staff, and he would probably have remained with me and shared my fate.

Shortly before West Virginia was placed under my command (May 24) I received two identical despatches from Gen. Scott and the Secretary of War (Mr. Cameron) stating that it was under-

stood that the rebels were collecting troops in that region, and asking me whether I could do anything to protect the Union men against them. I immediately replied that, if they desired it, I would clear West Virginia of the rebels. I received no reply whatever to this despatch, nor did I afterwards receive any other despatch or order from Washington that could be construed into an order or permission to operate in West Virginia. The movements that were subsequently made were initiated and conducted entirely on my own responsibility and of my own volition.

A few weeks before I took the field in West Virginia, and while my headquarters were in Cincinnati, I received one morning a telegram from Samuel Gill, an old graduate of West Point, and at that time superintendent of the Louisville and Lexington Railroad, stating that S. B. Buckner (afterwards the rebel general) wished to see me, and asking when I would be at home. I replied that I would see him that night. Accordingly the two (Buckner and Gill) reached my house about ten o'clock that evening. I received them alone, and we spent the night in conversation about the condition of affairs in Kentucky. Buckner was at that time the commandant of the "State Guards," a militia organization in Kentucky, but neither numerous nor efficient. It was, however, the only organization existing there, and Buckner was in close relations with Gov. McGoffin—was, in fact, his military adviser. Buckner brought me no letter or other credentials from the governor, nor did he assume to be authorized to make any arrangement in his name. The object of the interview was simply that we, as old friends, should compare views and see if we could do any good; thus I understood it. Buckner's main purpose seemed to be to ascertain what I should do in the event that Kentucky should be invaded by the secession forces then collecting under Gen. Pillow at various points in Tennessee near the Kentucky line. Buckner was very anxious that the Ohio and other Federal forces should respect the neutrality of Kentucky, and stated that he would do his best to preserve it, and drive Pillow out should he cross the boundary-line. I could assent to this only to the extent that I should be satisfied if the Kentuckians would immediately drive out any rebel force that might invade Kentucky, and continued, almost in these very words: "You had better be very quick about it, Simon, for if I learn that the rebels are in Ken-

tucky I will, with or without orders, drive them out without delay."

I expressly told Buckner that I had no power to guarantee the neutrality of Kentucky, and that, although my command did not extend over it, I would not tolerate the presence of rebel troops in that State. Not many days afterwards I accidentally met Buckner again at Cairo, and had a conversation with him in the presence of John M. Douglass, of Chicago. Buckner had then just returned from a visit to Pillow, and he clearly showed by his conversation that he understood my determination at the first interview just as I have related it above. Among other things he said that he found Pillow (with whom he had had serious personal quarrels before) sitting on a log; and, referring to his (Pillow's) purpose of entering Kentucky, said to him that "if he did McClellan would be after him"; to which, he said, Pillow replied, "He is the very person I want to meet." It may be remarked that Gen. Pillow had reason to be inimical to me. Buckner's letter to Gov. McGoffin, subsequently published, stating that in our first interview I had agreed to respect the neutrality of Kentucky, gave an incorrect account of the case, which was as I have stated it.

Before the necessity arose for action in West Virginia my views were turned towards Tennessee; for from the beginning I saw the great importance of aiding the loyal men in the mountainous portion of that State, of holding the railways there, and of occupying in force the great projecting bastion formed by that district. I was satisfied that a firm hold there in force, and with secure communications to the Ohio river, would soon render the occupation of Richmond and Eastern Virginia impossible to the secessionists. Unhappily the state of affairs brought about by the first Bull Run rendered it impossible to act upon this theory when the direction of military movements came into my hands, nor did any of my subordinates in the West seize the importance of the idea, frequently as I presented it to them. Had not the general direction of the war been taken from my hands at the time I was about inaugurating the Peninsular campaign, I should then have carried out the movement upon East Tennessee and Atlanta.

The plan of operations which Gen. Scott soon imparted to me confidentially was to occupy the summer and early fall in the

equipment, discipline, and instruction of the three-years troops, who were to be collected in numerous small camps of instruction, and to form in the fall "an iron band of sixty thousand troops" to be placed under my command, who were to move down the valley of the Mississippi by roads parallel with that stream, their supplies following in boats on the river. I think that subsequent events proved that the occupation of the central mountain region at an early period of the war would have produced more rapid and decisive results than any movement down the Mississippi.

While engaged in pushing forward the preparations of the troops, and doing all in my power to preserve the peace in Kentucky, events occurred which made it necessary for me to direct my attention more particularly to West Virginia.

It may be repeated here that my movements in West Virginia were, from first to last, undertaken upon my own authority and of my own volition, and without any advice, orders, or instructions from Washington or elsewhere.

The proclamations I addressed to the inhabitants of West Virginia and to my troops were also entirely of my own volition. I had received no intimation of the policy intended to be pursued by the general government, and had no time to seek for instructions. When, on the afternoon of May 26, I received at Camp Dennison confirmation of the movement of the secessionists to destroy the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad, and at once ordered by telegraph Kelly's and other regiments to remove from Wheeling and Parkersburg along the two branches of that railway, I wrote the proclamation and address of May 26 to the inhabitants of West Virginia and my troops, in my dining-room at Cincinnati, in the utmost haste, with the ladies of my family conversing in the room, and without consulting any one. They were at once despatched by telegraph to Wheeling and Parkersburg, there to be printed.

PROCLAMATION.

HEADQUARTERS, DEPARTMENT OF THE OHIO,
May 26, 1861.

To the Union Men of Western Virginia :

VIRGINIANS: The general government has long enough endured the machinations of a few factious rebels in your midst. Armed traitors have in vain endeavored to deter you from ex-

pressing your loyalty at the polls. Having failed in this infamous attempt to deprive you of the exercise of your dearest rights, they now seek to inaugurate a reign of terror, and thus force you to yield to their schemes and submit to the yoke of the traitorous conspiracy dignified by the name of the Southern Confederacy. They are destroying the property of citizens of your State and ruining your magnificent railways. The general government has heretofore carefully abstained from sending troops across the Ohio, or even from posting them along its banks, although frequently urged to do so by many of your prominent citizens. It determined to await the result of the late election, desirous that no one might be able to say that the slightest effort had been made from this side to influence the free expression of your opinions, although the many agencies brought to bear upon you by the rebels were well known. You have now shown, under the most adverse circumstances, that the great mass of the people of Western Virginia are true and loyal to that beneficent government under which we and our fathers have lived so long. As soon as the result of the election was known the traitors commenced their work of destruction. The general government cannot close its ears to the demand you have made for assistance. I have ordered troops to cross the Ohio river. They come as your friends and brothers; as enemies only to the armed rebels who are preying upon you. Your homes, your families, and your property are safe under our protection. All your rights shall be religiously respected, notwithstanding all that has been said by the traitors to induce you to believe that our advent among you will be signalized by interference with your slaves. Understand one thing clearly: not only will we abstain from all such interference, but we will, on the contrary, with an iron hand crush any attempt at insurrection on their part. Now that we are in your midst, I call upon you to fly to arms and support the general government. Sever the connection that binds you to traitors; proclaim to the world that the faith and loyalty so long boasted by the Old Dominion are still preserved in Western Virginia, and that you remain true to the stars and stripes.

GEO. B. MCCLELLAN,
Maj.-Gen. U. S. A., commanding Dept.

ADDRESS.

HEADQUARTERS, DEPARTMENT OF THE OHIO,
CINCINNATI, May 26, 1861.

SOLDIERS: You are ordered to cross the frontier and enter upon the soil of Virginia.

Your mission is to restore peace and confidence, to protect the majesty of the law, and to rescue our brethren from the grasp

of armed traitors. You are to act in concert with Virginia troops and to support their advance. I place under the safeguard of your honor the persons and property of the Virginians. I know that you will respect their feelings and all their rights.

Preserve the strictest discipline ; remember that each one of you holds in his keeping the honor of Ohio and the Union. If you are called upon to overcome armed opposition I know that your courage is equal to the task ; but remember that your only foes are the armed traitors, and show mercy even to them when they are in your power, for many of them are misguided. When, under your protection, the loyal men of Western Virginia have been enabled to organize and arm, they can protect themselves, and you can then return to your homes with the proud satisfaction of having saved a gallant people from destruction.

GEO. B. McCLELLAN,
Maj.-Gen. U. S. A., Commanding.

I, of course, sent copies to the President, with a letter explaining the necessity of my prompt action without waiting to consult with him. To this letter I never received any reply or acknowledgment ; nor did the President, or any of his civil or military advisers, ever inform me whether they approved or disapproved the course I had taken. I must give to the Washington functionaries at least this much credit—viz., that although they gave me no assistance or orders towards initiating the campaign, they never interfered with me after its commencement. And when they saw me in a fair way toward success they were much more ready to listen to my requisitions for supplies. But I must claim the credit, if credit there be, of having begun and carried on and finished this short campaign on my own resources and against every possible disadvantage.

During my whole career in West Virginia, as well as before I went there, I was kept in complete ignorance of the intentions of the Washington people in regard to movements in the East.

As I write this (Nov., 1883) I propose omitting for the present the story of the West Virginia campaign, but intend supplying it when my history of the Army of the Potomac is completed.

By the middle of July I had obtained complete possession of the country west of the mountains and north of the Kanawha, holding also the lower portion of the last-named valley, where

Gen. J. D. Cox had been checked in his advance. I held the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad as far as Cumberland, and covered all the roads leading into West Virginia from the Potomac as far south as those uniting about eighteen miles south of Beverly, and held the country north of the Kanawha by garrisons and moving columns.

The time of the three-months regiments was now rapidly expiring, and my movements were stopped for a time by the necessity of reorganizing them and getting up the three-years regiments.

My advance into West Virginia had been without orders and entirely of my own volition, to meet the necessities of the case, and all I knew about the movements in front of Washington was derived from the newspapers and private sources; I received no official information of McDowell's intended movements, and had no communication from headquarters on the subject until Gen. McDowell was actually in contact with the enemy. Consequently the projects I formed for operations, as soon as my command should be reorganized, were utterly independent of the state of affairs at Washington and based entirely upon my views of the condition of affairs in the West.

I pushed the reorganization with the utmost energy, and prepared a light column of five Ohio regiments and the incomplete 1st Virginia, with which I intended to march on the 22d or 23d of July, *via* Suttonsville, Somersville, and the Dogwood Ridge, to strike the Kanawha near Fayetteville Court-House, and there cut off the troops under Gens. Floyd and Wise, who were then in front of Cox, at and below Charleston.

Having entirely cleared the Kanawha valley of Confederates, I intended to secure my left flank by the line of the Upper Kanawha and New river, and to move upon Wytheville, in order to cut the line of railroad from Memphis to Lynchburg and to hold the country from New river to Abingdon. The objects I had in view were to cut the great east and west line of railroad, so as to deprive the Confederates of its use, and thence to employ the very circuitous route by Atlanta; and to rally the Union men of the mountain region, to arm and embody them, and at least hold my own in that mountain region until prepared to advance in whatever direction might prove best for the general good. In a letter to Gen. Scott from Buckhannon, dated July 6, I stated

my desire to move on Wytheville after clearing the country north of the Kanawha.

Had my designs been carried out Gen. Lee's attempt to recover West Virginia would have been made (if at all attempted) under very different auspices, and with much more decisive results in our favor. I am confident that I should have been in possession of Wytheville and the mountain region south of it in a very few weeks.

In this brief campaign the telegraph was for the first time, I think, constructed as the army advanced, and proved of very great use to us ; it caused a very great saving of time and horse-flesh.

On the evening of July 21, 1861, I first received intelligence of the advance of Gen. McDowell and the battle of Bull Run. I had received no intimation whatever in regard to the projected operations in the East, although I might have aided them very materially had I been asked to do so. The first telegram I received from Gen. Scott, early in the evening of the 21st, was to the effect that McDowell was gaining a grand victory, had taken four redoubts on the enemy's left, and would soon defeat them utterly. Then came a despatch not quite so favorable ; finally a telegram stating that McDowell was utterly defeated, his army routed and, as a mere mob, streaming towards Washington. The despatch closed with a question as to whether I could do anything across the mountains to relieve McDowell and Washington

I did not then know that Gen. Joe Johnston had left Winchester and joined Beauregard, supposing that Gen. Patterson had retained him in the Shenandoah Valley. Therefore, after a half-hour's consideration, I proposed that I should move *via* Romney, unite with Patterson, and operate against Johnston in the Shenandoah Valley. I offered, however, to move on Staunton, if they preferred that movement in Washington, provided the three-months men (of whom my army was mainly composed) would consent to remain a few weeks longer. No reply ever came to these propositions ; and it may here be stated that none of the three-months men would consent to remain beyond the termination of their enlistments, to move either towards the Gauley or eastward. For the Gauley movement I had, however, enough three-years men disposable.

On the next day, the 22d of July, I received a despatch from the adjutant-general stating that the condition of public affairs rendered my immediate presence in Washington necessary, and directing me to turn over my command to the next in rank, who happened to be Gen. Rosecrans.

I started next morning at daylight, rode on horseback sixty miles to the nearest railway station, and took the cars to Wheeling, where I found my wife awaiting me, and then proceeded to Washington, which I reached on the 26th of July, 1861.

Immediately after the affair of Rich Mountain I was instructed by Gen. Scott to release upon parole all the prisoners I had taken, with the exception of such as had left the United States service with the evident intention of joining that of the secessionists.

Col. John Pegram and a surgeon (Dr. Campbell) were the only ones who came under the latter category; and the order was promptly carried out in regard to the others. From the moment the prisoners came into my hands they were treated with the utmost kindness. The private baggage of the officers was restored to them whenever it could be found. The men, most of whom were starving when they surrendered, were at once fed; the same care was extended to their wounded as to our own. All of them were unanimous in their gratitude for the treatment they received. The slaves taken in attendance upon officers were allowed their choice whether to go North, remain with us, or return to their masters. Nearly all chose the latter alternative. Among the prisoners was an entire company composed of students of the William and Mary University, commanded by the president. Many of these were mere boys, among whom some were severely wounded. These last I sent home to their parents, without awaiting orders from Washington. It was a singular fact that the wounded preferred the attendance of our surgeons to that of their own, saying that the former were more kind and attentive to them. I mention thus particularly my treatment of these prisoners for the reason that they were the first in considerable numbers taken during the war, and that the course I pursued ought to have been reciprocated by the secessionists. Their treatment of our officers and men captured so soon afterwards at Bull Run is, therefore, without excuse. Whatever hardships prisoners afterwards suffered on either side, the blame

of the initiation of ill-treatment must fall on the rebels and not on us.

The successor of Gen. Garnett, Gen. Jackson (formerly U. S. Minister at Vienna), sent a flag of truce to thank me for the kindness I had extended to their wounded and unwounded officers and men. On subsequent occasions I received proofs of their appreciation of my course. Application was also made to me, under a flag, for the body of Gen. Garnett, which I agreed to deliver up; but before my orders in the case could reach Grafton the corpse had been taken East by the father of his late wife.

The successes just achieved in West Virginia by the troops under my command created great excitement through the loyal States. They were the only ones of importance achieved up to that time by the Union arms, and, since public attention had not been especially directed to that quarter, the people were all the more dazzled by the rapidity and brilliancy of the results. Although the telegram ordering me to the East contained no mention of the purpose in view, it was easy, under the circumstances, to divine it. I fully realized the importance and difficulty of the task to be imposed upon me, and naturally felt gratified by the proof of confidence the order afforded. Yet I felt great regret at leaving the West, for I should have been very glad to carry out the Kanawha and Wytheville movement, and thereby quiet affairs in that region before giving up the command.

It would probably have been better for me personally had my promotion been delayed a year or more. Yet I do not know who could have organized the Army of the Potomac as I did; and I have the consolation of knowing that, during the war, I never sought any commission or duty, but simply did my best in whatever position my superiors chose to place me.

CHAPTER III.

PRIVATE LETTERS OF GEN. MCCLELLAN TO HIS WIFE.

[June 21 to July 21, 1861.]

Marietta, June 21, 1861.—I must snatch a few moments to write you. We got off at 11.30 yesterday morning, and had a continual ovation all along the road. At every station where we stopped crowds had assembled to see the "young general": gray-headed old men and women, mothers holding up their children to take my hand, girls, boys, all sorts, cheering and crying, God bless you! I never went through such a scene in my life, and never expect to go through such another one. You would have been surprised at the excitement. At Chillicothe the ladies had prepared a dinner, and I had to be trotted through. They gave me about twenty beautiful bouquets and almost killed me with kindness. The trouble will be to fill their expectations, they seem to be so high. I could hear them say, "He is our own general"; "Look at him, how young he is"; "He will thrash them"; "He'll do," etc., etc., *ad infinitum*. . . .

We reached here about three in the morning, and at once went on board the boat, where I got about three hours' sleep until we reached Parkersburg. I have been hard at work all day, for I found everything in great confusion. Came up here in a boat about an hour ago, and shall go back to Parkersburg in two or three hours . . . We start from Parkersburg at six in the morning. With me go McCook's regiment (9th Ohio), Mack's company (4th U. S. Artillery), the Sturgess Rifle Co., a battery of six guns (Loomis's), and one company of cavalry (Barker's Illinois). Two Indiana regiments leave in the morning just after us. I shall have five additional regiments at Gratton to-morrow afternoon. I shall have some eighteen regiments, two batteries, two companies of cavalry at my disposal—enough to thrash anything I find. I think the danger has been greatly exaggerated, and anticipate little or no chance of winning laurels.

. . . A terrible storm is passing over us now ; thunder and lightning terrible in the extreme. . . .

Grafton, Sunday, June 23, 1861.— . . . We did not reach here until about two in the morning, and I was tired out. . . . Everything here needs the hand of the master and is getting it fast. I shall hardly be able to move from here for a couple of days. . . . The weather is delightful here : we are well up in the hills and have the mountain air. . . .

Grafton, June 26, 1861.— . . . I am detained here by want of supplies now on the way, and which I hope to receive soon. . . . It is very difficult to learn anything definite about our friends in front of us. Sometimes I am half-inclined to doubt whether there are many of them ; then again it looks as if there were a good many. We shall soon see, however. I am pretty well tired out and shall be very glad to get on the march.

What a row the papers have raised about the Buckner letter ! B. has represented a personal interview as an official treaty. . . .

Captain Howe is at Clarksburg—Guentler with him. Mack is here with us. . . . I don't know exactly when I shall be able to leave here ; certainly not before to-morrow, and perhaps not until next day. . . .

Grafton, June 27.— . . . I shall be after the gentlemen pretty shortly. You must be under no apprehensions as to me or the result. I never worked so hard in my life before ; even take my meals in my own room. . . .

Grafton, June 29.— . . . I am bothered half to death by delays in getting up supplies. Unless where I am in person, everything seems to go wrong. . . . I expect in the course of an hour or two to get to Clarksburg—will probably march twelve miles thence to-day—with Howe's battery, Mack's and the Chicago companies, and one company of cavalry. I shall have a telegraph line built to follow us up. Look on the maps and find Buckhannon and Beverly ; that is the direction of my march. I hope to thrash the infamous scamps before a week is over. All I fear is that I won't catch them. . . . What a strange performance that of Buckner's was ! Fortunately I have secured the testimony of Gill and Douglass (present at the Cairo interview) that

Buckner has entirely misrepresented me. It has annoyed me much, but I hope to do such work here as will set criticism at defiance. . . .

Clarksburg, June 30.— . . . Again great delays here ; will certainly get off by four A.M. to-morrow, and make a long march, probably twenty-eight miles. After the next march I shall have a large tent, borrowed from the Chicago Rifles ; your father and I will take that, make it reception-room, sleeping-apartment, mess-room, etc. . . . One thing takes up a great deal of time, yet I cannot avoid it : crowds of the country-people who have heard of me and read my proclamations come in from all directions to thank me, shake me by the hand, and look at their “liberator,” “the general” ! Of course I have to see them and talk to them. Well, it is a proud and glorious thing to see a whole people here, simple and unsophisticated, looking up to me as their deliverer from tyranny.

Camp 14 miles south of Clarksburg, July 2.— . . . We start in a few moments to Buckhannon. I have with me two regiments, a battery, two cavalry companies, three detached companies. Had several heavy rains yesterday. Rosecrans is at Buckhannon. I doubt whether the rebels will fight ; it is possible they may, but I begin to think that my successes will be due to manœuvres, and that I shall have no brilliant victories to record. I would be glad to clear them out of West Virginia and liberate the country without bloodshed, if possible. The people are rejoiced to see us.

Buckhannon, July 3.— . . . We had a pleasant march of sixteen miles yesterday through a beautiful mountain region : magnificent timber, lovely valleys running up from the main valley ; the people all out, waving their handkerchiefs and giving me plenty of bouquets and kind words. . . .

We nearly froze to death last night. I retired, as I thought, at about midnight, intending to have a good night's sleep. About half an hour after I shut up my tent a colonel in command of a detachment some fifteen miles distant came to report, so I received him in bed, and fell asleep about six times during the three hours I was talking with him. Finally.

however, he left, and I alternately slept and froze until seven o'clock. This morning I sent Bates on an expedition and raked up a couple of horse-blankets, by the aid of which I hope hereafter to be reasonably comfortable.

I hope to get the trains up to-morrow and make a final start during the day. We have a good many to deal with. I ordered the Guthrie Grays to Philippi this p.m. to resist a stampede attack that Gen. Morris feared.

Buckhannon, July 5, 1861.— . . . Yesterday was a very busy day with me, reviewing troops all the morning and giving orders all day and pretty much all night. . . . I realize now the dreadful responsibility on me—the lives of my men, the reputation of the country, and the success of our cause. The enemy are in front, and I shall probably move forward to-morrow, but not come in contact with them until about the next day. I shall feel my way and be very cautious, for I recognize the fact that everything requires success in first operations. You need not be at all alarmed as to the result; God is on our side. This is a beautiful country in which we now are—a lovely valley surrounded by mountains, well cultivated. The people hail our parties as deliverers wherever they go, and we meet with perfect ovations. Yesterday was very hot, and my head almost roasted as I stood bareheaded while the troops passed by in review. We have a nice little camp of our own here: Mack's and Steele's companies, Howe's battery next, two companies of cavalry, and two well-behaved Virginia companies. When we next go into camp we shall have the German regiment (9th Ohio) with us in camp. I intend having a picked brigade with me all the time. —'s regiment is on the march up from Clarksburg; they signaled their entrance into the country by breaking into and robbing a grocery-store at Webster! The Guthrie Grays are at Philippi; they leave there to-day, and will be here to-morrow night, following us up in reserve, or perhaps overtaking us before we meet the enemy. . . .

Buckhannon, July 7, 1861.—I have been obliged to inflict some severe punishments, and I presume the papers of the Western Reserve will be hard down on me for disgracing some of their friends guilty of the small crime of burglary. I believe

the army is beginning to comprehend that they have a master over them who is stern in punishing and means what he says. I fear I shall have to have some of them shot or hung; that may convince some of the particular individuals concerned that they are not in the right track exactly. . . . I have not told you about our camp at this place. It is in a large grass-field on a hill a little out of town, a beautiful grove near by. Your father and I share the same tent, a very large round one, pitched under a tree. Seth has one near by—an office; Lawrence Williams another as office and mess-tent. Marcy, the two Williamses, Judge Key, and Lander mess with me. Poe and the rest of the youngsters are in tents near by. . . . I had a very complimentary despatch from Gen. Scott last night. He said he was "charmed with my energy, movements, and success." Pretty well for the old man. I hope to deserve more of him in the future.

Move at six to-morrow morning to overtake advanced guard, which consists of three regiments, a battery, and one company of cavalry. I take up headquarters escort and four regiments infantry; three more follow next day. The large supply-train up and ready to move. Brig.-Gen. Garnett in command of enemy.

July 10, Roaring Creek.—We have occupied the important position on this line without loss. The enemy are in sight, and I am about sending out a strong armed reconnoissance to feel him and see what he is. I have been looking at their camps with my glass; they are strongly entrenched, but I think I can come the Cerro Gordo over them.

Telegram—Rich Mountain, July 12, 1861.—Have met with complete success; captured the enemy's entire camp, guns, tents, wagons, etc. Many prisoners, among whom several officers. Enemy's loss severe, ours very small. No officers lost on our side. I turned the position. All well.

July 12, Beverly.—Have gained a decided victory at small cost, and move on to Huttonsville to-morrow in hope of seizing the mountain-pass near that point before it is occupied in force by the enemy. If that can be done I can soon clear up the rest of the business to be done out here, and return to see you for a time at least. . . .

I had an affecting interview to-day with a poor woman whom we liberated from prison, where she had been confined for three weeks by these scoundrels merely because she was a Union woman. I enclose a flower from a bouquet the poor thing gave me.

Telegram—*July 13, 1861.*—Success complete. Enemy routed. Lost everything he had—guns, tents, wagons, etc. Pegram was in command. We lost but 10 killed and 35 wounded. Garnett has abandoned his camp between this and Philippi, and is in full retreat into Eastern Virginia. I hope still to cut him off. All well.

July 13, Huttonsville.—Since you last heard from me I received from Pegram a proposition to surrender, which I granted. L. Williams went out with an escort of cavalry and received him. He surrendered, with another colonel, some 25 officers, and 560 men. . . . I do not think the enemy in front of us in the Cheat Mountain pass, but that they have fallen back in hot haste. If they have, I will drive them out to-morrow and occupy the pass. . . . It now appears we killed nearly 200; took almost 900. . . .

The valley in which we are is one of the most beautiful I ever saw, and I am more than ever inclined to make my headquarters at Beverly and have you with me. Beverly is a quiet, old-fashioned town, in a lovely valley; a beautiful stream running by it—a perfectly pastoral scene, such as the old painters dreamed of but never realized. . . . I find that the prisoners are beyond measure astonished at my humanity towards them. The bearer of the flag from Pegram reached me about five this morning. He had been two days without food. I at once gave him some breakfast, and shortly after gave him a drink of whiskey; as he drank it he said: "I thank you, general; I drink that I may never again be in rebellion against the general government."

July 14, 1861.—I have released the doctor this morning of whom I told you. Also sent a lieutenant to carry back the body of his captain. Also those poor young boys of good family who had lost their limbs. I have tried to temper justice with mercy. I think these men will do me no harm, but that some mothers and sisters and wives will bless the name of your husband. . . .

Started this morning with a strong advanced guard, supported by two regiments, to test the question as to whether the rebels were really fortified in the Cheat Mountain pass. I went prepared for another fight, but found that they had scampered. We picked up some of their plunder, but they have undoubtedly gone at least to Staunton. The pass was strong, and they might have given us an immense deal of trouble. I went with a few men to Cheat river, the other side of the mountain. . . . I have made a very clear sweep of it. Never was more complete success gained with smaller sacrifice of life. Our prisoners will exceed one thousand.

On my return I found a telegram from Gen. Scott, sent before he had received information as to the full results of my victory. It was :

"The general-in-chief, and what is more the cabinet, including the President, are charmed with your activity, valor, and consequent success. We do not doubt that you will in due time sweep the rebels from West Virginia, but do not mean to precipitate you, as you are fast enough.

"WINFIELD SCOTT."

. . . Our ride to-day was magnificent ; some of the most splendid mountain views I ever beheld. The mountain we crossed is fully three thousand feet above its base, and the lovely little valleys, the cleared farms, the long ranges of mountains in the distance, all made a varied scene that I cannot describe to you. At the mountain-top was a pretty little farm, neat as neat could be. A very old couple lived there, the old lady as rosy and cheerful as a cricket. It is sad that war should visit even such sequestered spots as that.

Monday evening.—After closing my letter last night a courier arrived with the news that the troops I had sent in pursuit of Garnett had caught him, routed his army, captured his baggage, one gun, taken several prisoners, and that Garnett himself lay dead on the field of battle ! Such is the fate of traitors : one of their leaders a prisoner, the other killed ; their armies annihilated, their cause crushed in this region. . . . You ask what my plans are. Why, don't you know that my movements depend much on those of Monsieur l'Ennemi ? I expect to hear

in a few hours of the final extermination of the remnants of Garnett's army. Then I am almost hourly awaiting news of Cox's success in the Kanawha. Should Cox not be prompt enough I will go down there myself and bring the matter to a close.

West Virginia being cleared of the enemy, I have then to reorganize and consolidate the army. The time of the three-months men is about expiring, and they form so large portion of my force that some delay will ensue. . . .

Telegram—*July 15, Huttonsville.*—Garnett and whole concern have retreated. None nearer than Staunton. Crossed Cheat Mountain to-day and returned.

July 18, Beverly.—I am awaiting news from the Kanawha which will determine my movements. I do not see now but that I can leave here in a couple of days; but do not count upon it, as there are so many chances in war.

July 19, 1861.—I enclose Bulletin No. 5, printed with our portable press. You see we have carried civilization with us in the shape of the printing-press and the telegraph—institutions decidedly neglected in this part of the world heretofore, and, I fear, not likely to be paying institutions in this vicinity after we go. The good people here read but little and have but few ideas. Gen. Scott is decidedly flattering to me. I received from him yesterday a despatch beginning, "Your suggestion in respect to Staunton would be admirable, like your other conceptions and acts." I value that old man's praise very highly, and wrote him a short note last night telling him so. I enclose some scraps clipped off a dirty rebel flag captured at Rich Mountain. . . .

Am engaged now in arranging to march home the three-months men to be reorganized, and in clearing up matters generally. . . . I suppose McDowell drove the enemy from Manassas Junction yesterday; if so the way will be pretty well cleared for the present. If any decided movement is made towards Richmond I shall feel sure that they cannot intend to trouble my people here.

July 21, Beverly.— . . . Were you satisfied with the result?

Nine guns taken, twelve colors, lots of prisoners, and all this done with so little loss on our side! We found yesterday some more guns abandoned by Garnett, bringing the number taken up to nine. . . . Gen. Cox has been badly checked in the Kanawha; one wounded colonel (Newton) taken prisoner, two others and a lieutenant-colonel (Neff) captured while amusing themselves by an insane expedition in advance of the pickets—served them right! Cox lost more men in getting a detachment thrashed than I did in routing two armies. The consequence is, I shall move down with a heavy column to take Mr. Wise in rear, and hope either to drive him out without a battle or to catch him with his whole force. It is absolutely necessary for me to go in person; I have no one to whom I can entrust the operation. More than that, I don't feel sure that the men will fight very well under any one but myself; they have confidence in me and will do anything that I put them at. I lose about fourteen regiments now whose term of service is about expiring, and am sorry to say that I have as yet found but few whose patriotism is sufficient to induce them to remain beyond their time. I expect to get away from here by day after to-morrow at latest. The march to the Kanawha will require about seven days. I hope to be able to start for Cincinnati in about two weeks from to-morrow. I expect the Guthrie Grays here to-day, and will take them with me to the Kanawha.

CHAPTER IV.

Arrival at Washington—Reception by Gen. Scott and the President—
Condition of the capital—Takes command of the Division of the
Potomac—State of the army—Numbers, increase, and position of
troops.

I REACHED Washington late in the afternoon of Friday, July 26. I called on Gen. Scott that evening, and next morning reported to the adjutant-general, who instructed me to call upon the President, by whom I was received cordially and informed that he had placed me in command of Washington and all the troops in its vicinity. He directed me to return to the White House at one o'clock to be present at a cabinet meeting. I called again on Gen. Scott, then commanding the army of the United States, and, after conversing with him for some time on the state of affairs, casually remarked that I must take my leave, as the President had desired me to attend a cabinet meeting at one o'clock. Upon this the general became quite indignant and said that it was highly improper that I should receive such an invitation to his exclusion, and insisted upon keeping me until too late to attend the meeting. He then instructed me to ride around the city immediately and send stragglers back to their regiments. The general appeared to know and think very little about the defensive condition of the city and its approaches, and was more concerned about the disorganized condition of the stragglers in the city itself. I explained to the President later in the day the cause of my apparent lack of courtesy, at which he seemed more amused than otherwise.

After leaving the general I rode around the outskirts of the city on the Maryland side towards Tennallytown, Seventh Street, etc., and examined some of the camps, but did not devote myself individually to the police work of picking up drunken stragglers. I found no preparations whatever for defence, not even to the extent of putting the troops in military positions. Not a regiment was properly encamped, not a single avenue of approach guarded. All was chaos, and the streets, hotels, and bar-rooms

were filled with drunken officers and men absent from their regiments without leave—a perfect pandemonium. Many had even gone to their homes, their flight from Bull Run often terminating in New York, or even in New Hampshire and Maine. There was really nothing to prevent a small cavalry force from riding into the city. A determined attack would doubtless have carried Arlington Heights and placed the city at the mercy of a battery of rifled guns. If the secessionists attached any value to the possession of Washington, they committed their greatest error in not following up the victory of Bull Run.*

On the 25th had been issued the order constituting the Division of the Potomac and assigning me to its command. The division consisted of the Department of Northeast Virginia, under McDowell, which comprised all the troops in front of Washington on the Virginia bank of the river, and the Department of Washington, under Mansfield, which comprised all the troops in Washington and its vicinity on the Maryland side. Neither of these officers seemed pleased with the new arrangement, more particularly Mansfield.

On the 27th I assumed command and lost no time in acquainting myself with the situation and applying the proper remedies. On the next day, Sunday, I rode along the lines on

* The defenceless condition of Washington on this very day was described by Mr. Edwin M. Stanton, afterwards Secretary of War in Mr. Lincoln's cabinet, in a private letter, historic and prophetic, to ex-President Buchanan, as follows :

"WASHINGTON, July 26, 1861.

"DEAR SIR : . . . The dreadful disaster of Sunday can scarcely be mentioned. The imbecility of this administration culminated in that catastrophe; an irretrievable misfortune and national disgrace never to be forgotten are to be added to the ruin of all peaceful pursuits and national bankruptcy as the result of Lincoln's 'running the machine' for five months. . . . It is not unlikely that some change in the War and Navy Departments may take place, but none beyond those two departments until Jeff Davis turns out the whole concern. The capture of Washington seems now to be inevitable; during the whole of Monday and Tuesday it might have been taken without any resistance. The rout, overthrow, and demoralization of the whole army is complete. Even now I doubt whether any serious opposition to the entrance of the Confederate forces could be offered. While Lincoln, Scott, and the cabinet are disputing who is to blame, the city is unguarded and the enemy at hand. Gen. McClellan reached here last evening. But if he had the ability of Cæsar, Alexander, or Napoleon, what can he accomplish? Will not Scott's jealousy, cabinet intrigues, and Republican interference thwart him at every step?

"Yours truly,

EDWIN M. STANTON."

the Virginia side, beginning at Gen. W. T. Sherman's position opposite Georgetown. I found Sherman somewhat nervous. He attempted to dissuade me from passing outside of his pickets, believing the enemy to be close at hand. As that was precisely what I wanted to know, however, I did ride some distance beyond the pickets and found no enemy.

The condition of things on the Virginia side was not much better than on the other. The troops were on the river-banks or on the high ground immediately overlooking them. Few were in condition to fight, and but little had been done in the way of entrenching the approaches.

Fort Ellsworth, near Alexandria; Forts Runyon and Allan, at the end of the Long Bridge; Fort Corcoran, at the head of Aqueduct Bridge, with one or two small adjacent batteries, comprised all the works completed on the south side. A small battery at the Maryland end of the Chain Bridge was the only one on the Washington side of the river. Two or three small entrenchments had just been commenced on Arlington Heights. These detached works simply covered some of the principal direct approaches from the Virginia side, but in no sense formed part of any general defensive line.

The condition of affairs which thus presented itself to me upon assuming command was one of extreme difficulty and fraught with great danger. The defeated army of McDowell could not properly be called an army—it was only a collection of undisciplined, ill-officered, and uninstructed men, who were, as a rule, much demoralized by defeat and ready to run at the first shot. Positions from which the city could be commanded by the enemy's guns were open for their occupation. The troops were as insufficient in number as in quality. The period of service of many regiments had expired, or would do so in a few days. There was so little discipline that officers and men left their camps at their own will, and, as I have already stated, the city was full of drunken men in uniform. The executive was demoralized; an attack by the enemy was expected from hour to hour; material of war did not exist in anything like sufficient quantities; and, lastly, I was not supreme and unhampered, but often thwarted by the lieutenant-general.

I may be permitted to say that my arrival was hailed with delight by all, except, perhaps, the two generals whom I super-

seded ; and that the executive and the country soon passed from a state of abject despair to confidence, as will appear from the newspapers of the time.

The first and most pressing demand upon me was the immediate safety of the capital and the government. This was provided for by at once exacting the most rigid discipline and order ; by arresting all ignorant officers and men, and sending them back to their regiments ; by instituting and enforcing strict rules in regard to permission for leaving the camps ; by prohibiting civilians and others not on duty from crossing the river or visiting the camps without permits from headquarters ; by organizing permanent brigades under regular officers, and by placing the troops in good defensive positions. I threw them further out from the city, so as to have space in rear for manœuvring, and selected positions which commanded the various avenues of approach to the city and enabled the different brigades to afford reciprocal support.

I lost no time in acquiring an accurate knowledge of the ground in all directions, and by frequent visits to the troops made them personally acquainted with me, while I learned all about them, their condition and their needs, and thus soon succeeded in inspiring full confidence and a good *morale* in place of the lamentable state of affairs which existed on my arrival.

Thus I passed long days in the saddle and my nights in the office—a very fatiguing life, but one which made my power felt everywhere and by every one. There were about one thousand regular infantry with McDowell at Arlington. These, with a regular battery and a squadron of regular cavalry, I at once brought to the city and employed as a provost-guard, with the most satisfactory results. It was through their discipline, steadiness, and devotion that order was so promptly established. The following order explains itself :

General Order No. 2.

HEADQUARTERS, DIVISION OF THE POTOMAC,
WASHINGTON, July 30, 1861.

The general commanding the division has with much regret observed that large numbers of officers and men stationed in the vicinity of Washington are in the habit of frequenting the streets

and hotels of the city. This practice is eminently prejudicial to good order and military discipline, and must at once be discontinued. The time and services of all persons connected with this division should be devoted to their appropriate duties with their respective commands. It is therefore directed that hereafter no officer or soldier be allowed to absent himself from his camp and visit Washington except for the performance of some public duty or for the transaction of important private business, for which purpose written permits will be given by the commanders of brigades. The permit will state the object of the visit. Brigade commanders will be held responsible for the strict execution of this order. Col. Andrew Porter, of the 16th U. S. Infantry, is detached for temporary duty as provost-marshal in Washington, and will be obeyed and respected accordingly. Col. Porter will report in person at these headquarters for instructions.

By command of Maj.-Gen. McClellan.

(Signed)

S. WILLIAMS,
Asst. Adjt.-Gen.

The effect of all this was that on the 4th of August I was able to write to one of my family: "I have Washington perfectly quiet now; you would not know that there was a regiment here. I have restored order very completely already."

In re-arranging the posts and organization of the troops I brought over to the Washington side of the river those regiments which had been most shaken and demoralized by the defeat of Bull Run, and retained them there, with the newly arriving regiments, until in fit condition to be trusted on the side towards the enemy. My report (made in 1863) gives in sufficient detail the measures taken to expedite the instruction, discipline, and equipment of the new regiments on the Washington side before assigning them to brigades in front of the enemy. I also proceeded at once to reorganize the various staff departments on a footing commensurate with the actual and future condition of affairs, and used every effort to hasten the arrival of new regiments, as well as the manufacture and purchase of war material of all kinds.

Fortunately I had some excellent officers at my disposal and at once made use of them.

At this period I committed one of my greatest errors—that was in retaining Gen. McDowell on duty with the troops under my command. I knew that he had been a close student of military affairs, and thought that he possessed sufficient ability to be useful in a subordinate capacity. Moreover, I pitied him extremely,

and thought that circumstances had as much to do with his failure at Bull Run as any want of ability and energy on his part. I knew that if I sent him away he would be ruined for life, and desired to give him an opportunity to retrieve his military reputation. I therefore left him in the nominal command on the Virginia side of the river until the order forming the Army of the Potomac was issued ; he doing some little bureau work and retaining a large staff, while I performed the real military labor demanded by the occasion. I was sadly deceived. He never appreciated my motives, and felt no gratitude for my forbearance and kindness. Subsequent events proved that, although in some respects a very good bureau officer and a fair disciplinarian and drill-officer for a school of instruction, he lacked the qualities necessary for a commander in the field. After Pope's campaign it was not safe for McDowell to visit the camps of his troops ; the men declared that they would kill him. I have long been convinced that he intrigued against me to the utmost of his power. His conduct towards Fitz-John Porter on the second Bull Run campaign, his testimony in the latter's trial, and subsequent rehearing in 1880, show what manner of man he was. In all human probability I should have been spared an infinite amount of trouble had I relieved him upon reaching Washington, and allowed him to sink at once into obscurity.

When I resumed command it was clear that a prompt advance was wholly impracticable ; for, as I have already stated, the mass of the troops placed under me were utterly demoralized and destitute of organization, instruction, discipline, artillery, cavalry, transportation. I repeat that it was not worthy to be called an army. The request to bring with me, or cause to follow, a few of the victorious regiments from West Virginia was denied. As it was, nothing remained but to create an army and material as rapidly as possible from the very foundation.

The result of the first Bull Run had changed the conditions of the problem and complicated them exceedingly. In West Virginia I had raw troops against raw troops ; my opponents had all the advantages of knowledge of the ground, strong positions, and a country peculiarly adapted to the defensive. Yet I did not hesitate to attack, and gained complete success. I felt that against troops who had never been under fire and were not particularly well commanded the offensive offered great advan-

tages, and also felt entire confidence in my ability to handle my men, many of whom had attained a certain rough kind of discipline at Camp Dennison. But at Washington everything was different. The enemy not only had all the advantages of position, of entrenchments, of the *morale* resulting from success, but his discipline and drill were far better than our own. It would have been madness to renew the attempt until a complete change was made, for all the advantages of a sudden movement had been lost. The problem now was to attack victorious and finely drilled troops in entrenchment. I knew that this could be done only by well-organized and well-drilled troops, well supplied with artillery and other arms of service; the future of the war proved the correctness of this view. I had, therefore, no choice but to create a real army and its material out of nothing. The contest had already assumed such a phase that large masses were necessary to decide it. To use such masses they must be organized and instructed. Perhaps even then a few thousand regulars would have decided the war. But we had them not!

Let those who criticise me for the delay in creating an army and its material point out an instance when so much has been done with the same means in so short a time.

Not only was it necessary to organize, discipline, and drill the troops, but the immense labor of constructing the fortifications required to secure the city in the absence of the army was also to be performed by the troops. Not only did this consume much time and greatly retard the preparation of the army for the field, but it tied down the troops to the line of the defences, and rendered it impossible to take up a more advanced position until the works were finished.

Before my arrival no one had contemplated the complete fortification of the city. I at once conceived the idea and carried it into effect; for I saw immediately that the safety of the capital would always be a great clog on the movements of the army, unless its security were amply guaranteed by strong entrenchments. I cannot speak in too high terms of the cheerfulness, zeal, and activity with which these raw troops performed this arduous and disagreeable labor. They gave thus early an earnest of what might be expected from them under more trying circumstances.

The system adopted was that of detached earthworks. The

most important points were occupied by large bastioned forts closed at the gorge, with magazines, platforms, etc.; the scarps and counterscarps often reveted with timber, the parapets usually sodded. The intermediate points were occupied by lunettes, redoubts, batteries, etc., and in a few cases these were united by infantry parapets. The entire circumference of the city was thus protected. Towards Manassas the very important advanced points of Upton's and Munson's Hills were held by strong works, with some small batteries near by. This was the key to the approach in that direction.

In weighing the magnitude of the task of organizing the Army of the Potomac it must be borne in mind that the deficiency of instructed officers was almost as great as that of well-instructed non-commissioned officers and soldiers.

It is important to emphasize the condition of affairs at this juncture. If the enemy advanced in fair condition and reasonable force direct upon Washington, there were no means of preventing his occupation of Arlington Heights and the bombardment of the city. If he availed himself of the low water in the Potomac and crossed at or above the Great Falls, at the same time making a feint on the direct approaches, he could enter the city unopposed. For when I arrived there were neither entrenchments nor troops in position on the Maryland side, and Banks's command, near Harper's Ferry, was so distant, so unorganized, demoralized, and unfit to march or fight, that it could exercise no influence on the result.

Soon after my arrival I called upon Gen. McDowell, then in command of all the troops on the Virginia side, for a report as to the condition of his command. On the 30th of July he reported as follows :

"An inspection commenced yesterday by all the regular officers who were available, and is still going on, of all the regiments in this department. When the reports are made I shall be able to give something more than a mere opinion as to their condition to take the field. In the absence of any precise information I should say that but few regiments, if any, are in such condition at this time. Those who were in the last movement are not yet recovered, and the others are raw. Such as they are, about twenty regiments could be set in motion in two or three days. But few would have any organization with which they would be at all acquainted, and would have but little confidence in them-

selves or each other. But one battery of artillery ready; the others are refitting. The three companies of cavalry are a good deal run down. One New York regiment (Quimby's) is in a state of utter demoralization and asking to be discharged. In another (Bruin's) all the field officers tendered their resignation. An inspection of Quimby's, made by Major Wadsworth, seems to show that we have but one ultimatum—to dissolve it as worthless. I shall be at your headquarters this P.M."

On the 2d of August I received from Col. F. J. Porter, who had been on duty with Gen. Patterson, and continued with his successor, Gen. Banks, a letter from Sandy Hook, under date of the 1st of Aug., from which I give the following extract:

"That the government should not suffer by my withdrawal from this command, on the arrival of Gen. Banks I consented to remain, and had myself assigned to the position of acting inspector-general, in order to accomplish what no one else here can—a reorganization of this demoralized force. I think within a week I shall have placed it in excellent order for brigade commanders to perfect. My occupation will then be gone, unless this force is to take the initiative and enter on an active campaign. If to be active, with confidence reposed in me, I can be of much use and render the country essential services. But can I do so in other positions and more satisfactory to myself? Should the campaign turn out as the last, the odium which has been thrown unjustly upon Patterson will be reflected upon me and his other advisers. Time and orders from high authority will show he was right, and the country should be thankful. But I cannot bear another such, and see my companions, my juniors, rising to distinction and position, while I must plod away in a beaten and sandy track. . . ."

Every one in Washington realized the imminent danger of its capture, and none dreamed of a renewal of the attack upon Manassas under the circumstances and with the means at hand. They were but too well satisfied with the assurance that the measures I took would secure order and preserve the capital from insult or capture. A new advance made soon after the first would, if unsuccessful, have been certainly followed by the prompt occupation of Washington by the enemy. Until the new army was in such condition as to make success certain, it would have been unpardonable folly to advance without leaving Washington so well entrenched and garrisoned as to afford a safe retreat to the entire army if repulsed. This was impracticable

when I assumed command, and the Confederates, while receiving large accessions of force, lost no time in constructing strong entrenchments at Centreville, Manassas, etc.

There was so much misunderstanding and there were so many misrepresentations during the war as to the effective strength of the Army of the Potomac that it is necessary to explain briefly the manner in which the returns were made up.

They showed—

- 1st. The number of officers and men “present for duty.”
- 2d. The number of officers and men “present sick.”
- 3d. The number of officers and men “present in arrest.”
- 4th. The total present, this being the sum of the three preceding items.
- 5th. The number absent.
- 6th. The total present and absent, made up by taking the sum of items 4th and 5th.

It is, of course, clear that the first item comprises all the officers and men who are effective for the immediate work of the army, yet—either through ignorance, or to injure me by exaggerating the force at my disposal—often the “total present,” often the “aggregate present and absent,” was given, by those occupying official positions, as the effective strength of the Army of the Potomac. In the latter case this sometimes involved an exaggeration of over sixty per cent. ; as, for example, on July 10, 1862, the total present for duty was 89,549, while the aggregate present and absent was 144,886.

Nor, as our returns were made during the first two years of the war, were the numbers given as “present for duty” by any means a true measure of the effective force, because one of the instructions for making out the returns was that “all officers and enlisted men present on extra or daily duty will be borne in the column of ‘present for duty.’” Therefore there were included among the “present for duty” all camp, train, and special guards, all men detailed for duty as teamsters, laborers, and otherwise, in the headquarters, commissary, engineer, medical, and ordnance departments ; all orderlies, cooks, officers’ servants—in short, those who form no part of the fighting strength of an army, and who in every European and other service, except our own, are borne in a separate column as present on special extra or daily duty, so that the column of “present for duty” then gives

the actual available fighting force. After careful study, and with ample means to reach accurate results, Gen. A. A. Humphreys estimates the number of extra-duty officers and men, not including camp-guards, orderlies, cooks, etc., etc., who were not in the ranks of the Army of the Potomac at all on the 20th of June, 1862, to be from 17,000 to 18,000 out of 105,000, or about one-sixth. This is, doubtless, very near the truth, and not above it; so that, as the Confederates reported only the officers and men in ranks as present for duty, there must always be deducted from the "present for duty" strength of the Army of the Potomac during the first two years of the war about one-sixth to make a fair comparison with the enemy. But, allowing for camp-guards and officers' servants, etc., a deduction of one-fifth at least should be made.

On the 1st of Aug., 1861, I had, according to the returns, less than 50,000 infantry, 1,000 cavalry, 650 artillerists with 30 guns, present. Bearing in mind what has just been stated, and making the proper deduction for the sick, in arrest, and on extra duty, it appears that there were certainly not more than 37,000 infantry in the ranks. The term of service of many of these regiments was about expiring, and they were gradually replaced by perfectly raw new regiments. On the 19th of Aug. I had less than 42,000 effective of all arms, such as they were; and the most necessary defences still required about a week to enable them to resist assaults with tolerable certainty. On the 20th of Aug. I had 80 guns and less than 1,200 cavalry. On the 25th of Aug. I had about 50,000 effective of all arms and perhaps 100 guns. The return for Aug. 31, 1861, shows that, excluding Gen. Dix's command, there was an "aggregate present" of 76,415 of all arms. This comprised Banks's command near Harper's Ferry and above, and Stone's corps of observation at Poolesville. It included the sick, those under arrest, and all extra-duty men. Making the proper deduction on these accounts, the effective force, including Banks's and Stone's, is reduced to 58,680 officers and men of all arms; many of these being still unfit for service through lack of discipline and instruction, unserviceable arms, etc. This is just about the number of effectives reported by the Confederates as composing Johnston's command.

After providing, even very insufficiently, for watching the Potomac and guarding the communication with Baltimore, there

would not have been left more than 45,000 effectives for the garrison of Washington and active operation. Certainly not 10,000 of these troops were in any condition to make an offensive movement, nor were they sufficient in numbers to furnish an active column which would give the slightest hope of success after making even a small provision for the safety of the capital.

On the 15th of Oct., 1861, the troops under my command "present for duty" numbered .	.	133,200	
Of these there were unarmed and unequipped .	.	12,000	
		<hr/>	
		121,200	
Deduct one-sixth for extra-duty men, etc., .	.	20,200	
		<hr/>	
Total effectives, without regard to instruction, Gen. Dix was charged with the defence of Baltimore, occupation of the east shore, garrison of Fort Delaware, the communications to Philadelphia, and the immediate approaches to Baltimore, including Annapolis. In view of the strong secessionist feeling in his district it would have been dangerous to leave him with less than .	.	101,000	
The upper Potomac, from Washington to Cumberland, a distance of more than one hundred and sixty miles by the river, could not safely be watched and guarded by less than .		15,000	
The lower Potomac, the south part of Maryland, and communication with Baltimore required at least		5,000	
For the garrison of Washington and its defences, and securing the flanks and communication of the main army during its advance on Manassas, a very moderate estimate would have been		30,000	60,000
		<hr/>	
Leaving for the active column			41,000

In estimating the force of the above detachments it must be remembered that I was obliged to regard the apprehensions of the administration and the state of feeling in Maryland, as well as the purely military considerations. I was not then in com-

mand of all the armies of the United States, far less free to disregard the administration. Had I been chief of the state the conditions of the problem would have been very different. In that case, with the discipline, instruction, and armament sufficiently advanced—which was not the fact—I would not have hesitated to throw Banks on Winchester with 15,000 men, to act on the left flank of the enemy at Manassas, and, reducing the garrison of Washington to 10,000 men, advance on Manassas with 60,000 men; that would have been the best that could have been done, and in that event 10,000 must have watched the line of the Occoquan, leaving 50,000 available for the attack on Manassas.

On the 27th of Oct. the "present for duty" were . . .	147,695
Deduct unarmed and unequipped, . . .	13,410
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	134,285
Deduct one-sixth for extra duty, etc., . . .	22,360
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	111,925
Deduct garrisons and corps of deserters, . . .	60,000
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Leaving available for active operations, . . .	51,925
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On the 4th of Nov. the "present for duty" were . . .	152,748
Deduct unarmed and unequipped, . . .	8,706
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	144,042
Deduct one-sixth for extra-duty men, etc., . . .	24,007
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	120,035
Garrisons, etc., . . .	60,000
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For active operations, officers and men of all arms, . . .	60,035

Up to the beginning of November, and still later, many of the infantry were insufficiently drilled and disciplined, and they were to a considerable extent armed with unserviceable weapons. Few of the cavalry were completely armed, and most of the volunteer cavalry were still very inefficient. The artillery numbered 228 guns, but many of the batteries were still entirely unfit to take the field. Transportation was still lacking for any extended movements.

On the 1st of Dec. there were "present for duty" . . .	169,452
Of these there were unequipped and unarmed, at least . . .	<u>5,000</u>
	164,452
Deduct extra-duty men, etc.,	<u>27,600</u>
	136,852
Deduct garrisons, etc., as before,	<u>60,000</u>
For active operations,	<u>76,852</u>

On the 27th of Aug., when I assumed command of the Division of the Potomac, Gen. Banks had just been relieved by Gen. Dix in the command of the Department of Maryland, and in his turn relieved Gen. Patterson—whose term of service expired on that day—in the command of the Department of the Shenandoah. On the 1st of Aug. Gen. Banks's headquarters were at Sandy Hook, in the immediate vicinity of Harper's Ferry. In consequence of the expiration of service of the three-months regiments this command was in a state of disorganization for the moment.

As the geographical Division of the Potomac extended along that river somewhat beyond the Monocacy, and it fell within my province to guard that part of the river, within two or three days after assuming command I organized a brigade of four regiments, under Gen. C. P. Stone, and ordered him to the vicinity of Poolesville to observe and guard the Potomac between the Great Falls and the limits of Gen. Banks's command. On the 2d of Aug. the seven regiments of the Pennsylvania Reserve Corps, then arrived, were organized as a brigade under Gen. G. A. McCall, and ordered to Tennallytown to guard the important roads meeting at that point, and to observe the river as far as the Great Falls. At this place the brigade was in position to support Stone and the troops at the Chain Bridge, and, in case of necessity, would rapidly move by the Aqueduct Bridge to support the troops at Fort Corcoran and Arlington Heights. On the 1st the two regiments at the Chain Bridge were placed under the command of Col. W. F. Smith, and within three days his command was increased to four regiments of infantry, one battery, and one company of cavalry. At the same time Couch's brigade was posted at the Toll-Gate on the Seventh Street road, where the Milkhouse Ford and Blagden's Mill

roads intersect it. Hooker's brigade was posted on the Bladensburg road, near the position afterwards entrenched. Gen. W. T. Sherman's brigade, reinforced by three regiments of infantry, with one battery and one company of regular cavalry, occupied Fort Corcoran, at the head of the Georgetown Aqueduct Bridge. Gens. Hunter's and Keyes's brigades held the Arlington Heights. Col. Richardson's brigade was posted in advance of the Long Bridge, with one regiment in Fort Runyon. Near this were a couple of light batteries under Col. H. J. Hunt, ready to move whenever required. Col. Blenker's brigade was in advance of Roach's Mills, in the valley of Four-Mile Run. Gens. Franklin's and Heintzelman's brigades were in front of Alexandria, in the vicinity of the Seminary. Kearny's brigade was at Cloud's Mills, on the Annandale turnpike. One regiment was stationed at Fort Ellsworth, immediately in front of Alexandria.

I had thus provided against all eventualities as well as the means in my possession permitted. If the enemy confined himself to a direct advance the probable points of attack were held by eight brigades, so posted that they could render mutual assistance, if all were not simultaneously assailed in force, while the brigades of McCall, Couch, and Hooker could move by good roads to support them; Hooker having about five miles to march to the Long Bridge, Couch about six to the Long Bridge, the Aqueduct, or to the Chain Bridge, and McCall having a little over three miles to the Chain Bridge or the Aqueduct, or about six miles to the Long Bridge.

If the enemy crossed the Potomac for the purpose of attacking on the Maryland side, Stone was in position to fall back on McCall or Couch after retarding their passage of the river; so that there would have been four brigades, with good communication to either flank, in readiness to oppose them, while troops could have been brought from the Virginia side to their support.

In the city were the few regulars acting as a provost-guard, and ready to be thrown wherever their services might be required.

On the 5th of Aug. the first three regiments of the Excelsior Brigade and the 79th New York were formed into a provisional brigade and posted in the suburbs of Washington; they were soon moved south of the Anacostia to the vicinity of

Uniontown. On the 7th McCall received a battery of regular artillery; and on the 9th Kearny and Sherman each received another company of volunteer cavalry, and on the same day King's brigade of three regiments was formed, and posted on Meridian Hill. Three days afterwards it was increased by two regiments. On the 10th a battery was sent to Stone, and a second one to McCall, who received another regiment on the 12th.

The formation of divisions was thus:

Aug. 24, 1861: McDowell's division, consisting of Keyes's and Wadsworth's brigades. King's brigade was added on Oct. 5.

About the same date—*i.e.*, within two or three days after the formation of the Army of the Potomac—the troops under Gen. Banks were organized as a division.

Aug. 28, 1861: Franklin's division, consisting of Kearny's and Franklin's old brigade. A third brigade added Sept. 4.

Aug. 30, 1861: F. J. Porter's division, consisting of two brigades. A third brigade added Sept. 27.

Sept. 12, 1861: Stone's division, consisting of two brigades, Lander's and Peck's. Baker's brigade was added towards the end of the month or early in October.

Sept. 14, 1861: Buell's division, consisting of Couch's and Graham's brigades. A third brigade added early in October.

Sept. 16, 1861: McCall's division; on the 25th of that month he received the last two regiments of the Pennsylvania Reserves, so that his division consisted of thirteen regiments in three brigades, under Meade, J. F. Reynolds, and Ord.

Sept. 28, 1861: W. F. Smith's division, consisting of the Vermont brigade (afterwards Brooks's), J. J. Stevens's and Hancock's brigades.

Oct. 5, 1861: Heintzelman's division, consisting of Richardson's, Sedgwick's, and Jameson's brigades.

Oct. 11, 1861: Hooker's division, consisting of his own (afterwards Naglee's) brigade and Sickles's brigade. In November a third brigade (Starr's New Jersey) was added.

Oct. 12, 1861: Blenker's division, consisting of Stahl's and Steinwehr's brigades. A third brigade added during the winter.

Nov. 25, 1861: Sumner's division, consisting of Howard's, Meagher's, and French's brigades.

Dec. 6, 1861: Casey's division, consisting of three brigades.

CHAPTER V.

PRIVATE LETTERS.

[*July 27 to Sept. 30, 1861.*]

July 27, 1861, Washington, D. C.—I have been assigned to the command of a division composed of the departments of northeastern Virginia (that under McDowell) and that of Washington (now under Mansfield). Neither of them like it much, especially Mansfield; but I think they must ere long become accustomed to it, as there is no help for it. . . . I find myself in a new and strange position here: President, cabinet, Gen. Scott, and all deferring to me. By some strange operation of magic I seem to have become the power of the land.

I see already the main causes of our recent failure; I am sure that I can remedy these, and am confident that I can lead these armies of men to victory once more. I start to-morrow very early on a tour through the lines on the other side of the river. It will occupy me all day long, and a rather fatiguing ride it will be, but I will be able to make up my mind as to the state of things. Refused invitations to dine to-day from Gen. Scott and four secretaries; had too many things to attend to. . . .

I will endeavor to enclose with this the "thanks of Congress," which please preserve. I feel very proud of it. Gen. Scott objected to it on the ground that it ought to be accompanied by a gold medal. I cheerfully acquiesce in the thanks by themselves, hoping to win the medal by some other action, and the sword by some other *fait d'éclat*.

July 30, Washington.— . . . Had to work until nearly three this morning. . . . I am getting my ideas pretty well arranged in regard to the strength of my army; it will be a very large one. I have been employed in trying to get the right kind of general officers. . . . Have been working this morning at a bill allowing me to appoint as many aides as I please from civil life and from the army. . . .

I went to the Senate to get it through, and was quite over-

whelmed by the congratulations I received and the respect with which I was treated. I suppose half a dozen of the oldest made the remark I am becoming so much used to: "Why, how young you look, and yet an old soldier!" It seems to strike everybody that I am very young. They give me my way in everything, full swing and unbounded confidence. All tell me that I am held responsible for the fate of the nation, and that all its resources shall be placed at my disposal. It is an immense task that I have on my hands, but I believe I can accomplish it. . . . When I was in the Senate chamber to-day and found those old men flocking around me; when I afterwards stood in the library, looking over the Capitol of our great nation, and saw the crowd gathering around to stare at me, I began to feel how great the task committed to me. Oh! how sincerely I pray to God that I may be endowed with the wisdom and courage necessary to accomplish the work. Who would have thought, when we were married, that I should so soon be called upon to save my country?

Aug. 2.—Rode over the river, looked at some of the works, and inspected three or four regiments; worked at organizing brigades—just got through with that. I handed to the President to-night a carefully considered plan for conducting the war on a large scale. . . . I shall carry this thing on *en grand* and crush the rebels in one campaign. I flatter myself that Beauregard has gained his last victory. We need success and must have it. I will leave nothing undone to gain it. Gen. Scott has been trying to work a traverse to have——made inspector-general of *my* army and of *the* army. I respectfully declined the favor. . . .

I have on the staff Seth Williams as adjutant-general; Barnard as chief-engineer; Van Vliet, chief-quartermaster; H. F. Clarke, chief-commissary; Barry, chief of artillery; Meade will be senior topographer; Dr. Tripler, medical director. I have applied for Kingsbury as chief of ordnance, and for Armstrong and Sweitzer as aides-de-camp. I dine with the President to-morrow, where I presume I shall meet Prince Napoleon. . . . You would laugh if you could see the scores of queer letters I receive in these days. I am sorry to say I do not answer any of them; I do no writing myself, except to you. . . . I was in the saddle

nearly twelve hours yesterday. I broke down your father and sent Seth home half an hour since, neither of them having been out all to-day.

Aug. 4.—I dined at the President's yesterday. I suppose some forty were present—Prince Napoleon and his staff, French minister, English ditto, cabinet, some senators, Gen. Scott, and myself. The dinner was not especially interesting; rather long, and rather tedious, as such things generally are. I was placed between Col. Pisani, one of the prince's aides, who spoke no English, and a member of the ——— legation who labored under the delusion that he spoke our native tongue with fluency. I had some long talks with the prince, who speaks English very much as the Frenchmen do in the old English comedies. He is an intelligent man. . . . It made me feel a little strangely when I went in to the President's last evening with the old general leaning on me; I could see that many marked the contrast. . . . I have Washington perfectly quiet now. You would not know that there was a regiment here. I have restored order very completely already.

Aug. 8.— . . . Rose early to-day (having retired at three A.M.), and was pestered to death with senators, etc., and a row with Gen. Scott until about four o'clock; then crossed the river and rode beyond and along the line of pickets for some distance. Came back and had a long interview with Seward about my "pronunciamiento" against Gen. Scott's policy. . . . I have scarcely slept one moment for the last three nights, knowing well that the enemy intend some movement and fully recognizing our own weakness. If Beauregard does not attack to-night I shall look upon it as a dispensation of Providence. He ought to do it. Every day strengthens me. I am leaving nothing undone to increase our force; but the old general always comes in the way. He understands nothing, appreciates nothing.

Aug. —.—On Sunday, instead of going to church, was sent for by the President immediately after breakfast, and kept busy until midnight, when I returned from a long ride too tired to talk even. Yesterday in the saddle from ten to five, and then persecuted until after midnight. To-day the President sent for me

before I was up ; have been at work ever since, and soon start out to receive a brigade and some batteries.

Aug. 9, 1861, 1 A.M.—I have had a busy day : started from here at seven in the morning, and was in the saddle until about nine this evening ; rode over the advanced position on the other side of the river, was soundly drenched in a hard rain, and have been busy ever since my return. Things are improving daily. I received three new regiments to-day ; fitted out one new battery yesterday, another to-day, two to-morrow, about five day after. Within four days I hope to have at least 21 batteries—say 124 field-guns—18 companies of cavalry, and some 70 regiments of infantry. Gen. Scott is the great obstacle. He will not comprehend the danger. I have to fight my way against him. To-morrow the question will probably be decided by giving me absolute control independently of him. I suppose it will result in enmity on his part against me ; but I have no choice. The people call upon me to save the country. I must save it, and cannot respect anything that is in the way.

I receive letter after letter, have conversation after conversation, calling on me to save the nation, alluding to the presidency, dictatorship, etc. As I hope one day to be united with you for ever in heaven, I have no such aspiration. I would cheerfully take the dictatorship and agree to lay down my life when the country is saved. I am not spoiled by my unexpected new position. I feel sure that God will give me the strength and wisdom to preserve this great nation ; but I tell you, who share all my thoughts, that I have no selfish feeling in this matter. I feel that God has placed a great work in my hands. I have not sought it. I know how weak I am, but I know that I mean to do right, and I believe that God will help me and give me the wisdom I do not possess. Pray for me, that I may be able to accomplish my task, the greatest, perhaps, that any poor, weak mortal ever had to do. . . . God grant that I may bring this war to an end and be permitted to spend the rest of my days quietly with you !

I met the prince (Napoleon) at Alexandria to-day and came up with him. He says that Beauregard's head is turned ; that Joe Johnston is quiet and sad, and that he spoke to him in very kind terms of me.

Aug. 12.— . . . Every day shows some progress. If Beauregard will give me another week or ten days I will feel quite comfortable again. I have been anxious, especially as the old man and I do not get along very well together.

Aug. 13.—I am living in Com. Wilkes's house, the northwest corner of Jackson Square, close by where you used to visit Secretary Marcy's family. It is a very nice house. I occupy the three front rooms on the second story; Van Vliet the room in rear of mine; Judge Key behind him; Colburn the story above. I receive the staff every morning until ten and every evening at nine. Quite a levee it makes, and a rather fine-looking set they are. Kingsbury arrived last night. Did I tell you that Hudson is one of my regular aides?

Aug. 14.—Rode to McCall's camp, out to the line of pickets, and followed that to the Aqueduct Bridge, thence home by W. F. Smith's camp; got home at ten P.M.

Midnight, 15th.— . . . I am almost tired out; I cannot get one minute's rest during the day, and sleep with one eye open at night, looking out sharply for Beauregard, who, I think, has some notion of making a dash in this direction. Gen. Scott is the most dangerous antagonist I have. Our ideas are so widely different that it is impossible for us to work together much longer—*tant pour cela*. My day has been spent much as usual. . . . Rose at 6.30; did any reasonable amount of business, among which may be classed quelling a couple of mutinies among the volunteers; started on my usual ride at 4.30, came home at nine; have been hard at work ever since. As to my mutinous friends, I have ordered sixty-three of the 2d Maine regiment to be sent as prisoners to the Dry Tortugas, there to serve out the rest of the war as prisoners at hard labor. I reduced the others (79th N. Y.) by sending out a battalion, battery, and squadron of regulars to take care of them. The gentlemen at once laid down their arms, and I have the ringleaders in irons. They will be tried and probably shot to-morrow. An example is necessary to bring these people up to the mark; and if they will not fight and do their duty from honorable motives, I intend to coerce them and let them see what they have to expect if they pretend to

rebel. I deprived the 79th of their colors, and have them downstairs, not to be returned to them until they have earned them again by good behavior. The great trouble is the want of officers of regiments. We have good material, but no officers.

Aug. 14, 1861.—I was so occupied yesterday that I could not write. Profs. Mahan and Bache at breakfast. Then came the usual levee. Then Burnside turned up, and I had to listen to his explanation of some slanders against him; then some naval officers; then I don't know how many others before dinner. After dinner I rode out until about nine, when I found the President had been to see me and wanted me at the White House. After I got through there I went to see Montgomery Blair on business. Then, on my return, found some more of the cabinet, McDowell, etc., so that it was after midnight when I got to my room, completely fatigued. So my days and nights pass, a steady course of conversations and orders all day. Except when I get out for a ride, no relief for mind or body.

Washington, 16th.— . . . I am here in a terrible place: the enemy have from three to four times my force; the President, the old general, cannot or will not see the true state of affairs. Most of my troops are demoralized by the defeat at Bull Run; some regiments even mutinous. I have probably stopped that; but you see my position is not pleasant. . . . I have, I believe, made the best possible disposition of the few men under my command; will quietly await events, and, if the enemy attacks, will try to make my movements as rapid and desperate as may be. If my men will only fight I think I can thrash him, notwithstanding the disparity of numbers. As it is, I trust to God to give success to our arms, though He is not wont to aid those who refuse to aid themselves. . . . I am weary of all this. I have no ambition in the present affairs; only wish to save my country, and find the incapables around me will not permit it. They sit on the verge of the precipice, and cannot realize what they see. Their reply to everything is, "Impossible! Impossible!" They think nothing possible which is against their wishes.

Aug. 16, 6 P.M.— . . . Gen. Scott is at last opening his eyes to the fact that I am right and that we are in imminent danger.

Providence is aiding me by heavy rains, which are swelling the Potomac, which may be impassable for a week; if so we are saved. If Beauregard comes down upon us soon I have everything ready to make a manœuvre which will be decisive. Give me two weeks and I will defy Beauregard; in a week the chances will be at least even.

Aug. 18.—My command is at last extended, so that I take in Banks in the Shenandoah and Dix at Baltimore. . . . The true reason why I did not bring you here was that I did not deem it safe. We may have to fight a battle under the defences of Washington within a week, and I did not care to have you exposed to the chances. If Beauregard does not attack within two days he has lost every chance of success. If by the time you receive this letter you have not heard of a battle through the telegraph you may be easy and contented.

Aug. 19.— . . . If this week passes without a battle, and reinforcements come in, I shall feel sure that the dangerous point is turned.

6 P.M.—I have been inspecting the defences over the river and find them quite strong. We are becoming stronger in our position every day, and I hope for large reinforcements this week.

Aug. 20.— . . . If Beauregard does not attack this week he is foolish. He has given me infinite advantages, and you may be sure I have not neglected the opportunity. Every day adds to the strength of my defences, to the perfection of the organization, and some little to our forces. I have now about 80 field-guns (there were but 49 at Bull Run), and by Saturday will have 112. There were only some 400 cavalry at Bull Run; I now have about 1,200, and by the close of the week will have some 3,000. I am gaining rapidly in every way. I can now defend Washington with almost perfect certainty. When I came here it could have been taken with the utmost ease. In a week I ought to be perfectly safe and be prepared to defend all Maryland; in another week to advance our position.

. . . The men were very enthusiastic and looked well. My old State will come out handsomely. I have been much vexed to-night by sundry troublesome things; the only comfort has been

your father's arrival, which is a great relief to me. I like to see that cool, steady head near me.

Aug. 23.— . . . Yesterday I rode to Alexandria and reviewed four brigades—that is, seventeen regiments. . . . Beauregard has missed his chance, and I have gained what I most needed—time! . . .

I do not *live* at all ; merely exist, worked and worried half to death. I have no privacy, no leisure, no relaxation, except in reading your letters and writing to you. We take our meals at Wormley's, a colored gentleman who keeps a restaurant just around the corner in I Street. I take breakfast there pretty regularly ; sometimes have it sent over here. As to dinner, it takes its chances, and generally gets no chance at all, as it is often ten o'clock when I get back from my ride, and I have nothing to eat all day. . . .

Aug. 25.—Yesterday started at nine A.M., rode over Long Bridge and reviewed Richardson's brigade, then went three miles further and at twelve reviewed Blenker's brigade at Roach's Mills, then rode some ten miles looking for a position in which to fight a battle to cover Alexandria should it be attacked. I found one which satisfies me entirely. I then returned to Fort Runyon, near the head of Long Bridge, and reviewed the 21st New York, after which reviewed four batteries of light artillery. . . . This morning telegram from other side announcing enemy advancing in force. Started off aides and put the wires at work ; when fairly started alarm proved false. . . . Friend Beauregard has allowed the chance to escape him. I have now some 65,000 effective men ; will have 75,000 by end of week. Last week he certainly had double our force. I feel sure that the dangerous moment has passed.

26th.— . . . Reviewed Sherman's command (seven regiments) near Fort Corcoran ; then McDowell's (eight regiments) at the race-course ; then rode to the ground in front of Alexandria—twelve hours in saddle.

Aug. 31.—Drove out yesterday as far as McCall's camp, and to-day down over the river for several hours. Have not yet ven-

tured on horseback again ; may try it to-morrow. . . . Our defences are becoming very strong now, and the army is increasing in efficiency and numbers quite rapidly. I think Beauregard has abandoned the idea of crossing the river above us, and I learned to-day again that my movements had entirely disconcerted their plans and that they did not know what to do. They are suffering much from sickness, and I fancy are not in the best possible condition. If they venture to attack us here they will have an awful time of it. I do not think they will dare to attack. We are now ready for them. The news from every quarter to-night is favorable. All goes well.

Sept. 4, 1861.—I took an early dinner, and then mounted the bay, Sturgis's horse, and rode to McCall's camp at Tennallytown. Sweitzer and Colburn went with me, as usual when hard riding is expected ; also the ordinary escort of a sergeant and ten dragoons. . . . Learned that the firing at Great Falls amounted to little, and that the orders I had before given to send another regiment and another battery were sufficient. Then rode to Little Falls (Chain Bridge) and went along the whole picket-line.

Sept. —.— . . . Had my dinner just after writing the above, and then rode to review a brigade and 32 guns away over beyond the Capitol. Just as I got through Seth rode up with a message to the effect that the enemy were in force near Smith (W. F.) I rode rapidly home, changed my horse, and rode out to Smith's camp. I determined at once to throw Smith across the river, and went over with his brigade myself till I saw him in position, and then came back at 1.30 pretty well tired out.

Sept. 6.—Rode along pickets from Corcoran to Chain Bridge. Found everything in good condition and ready for a battle. If B. attacks now he will inevitably be defeated with terrible loss. . . . I feel now perfectly secure against an attack ; the next thing will be to attack him.

Sept. 8.—What a shame that any one should spread such a wicked rumor in regard to my being killed ! I beg to assure you that I have not been killed a single time since I reached Washington. So don't believe any such absurd rumors. How lucky

that you did not hear the report until after you received the telegram ! I had another bouquet this morning, one from the " Lady President." Mr. Lincoln came this morning to ask me to pardon a man that I had ordered to be shot, suggesting that I could give as a reason in the order that it was by request of the " Lady President."

Sept. —.—Inspected works from Corcoran to Albany ; reviewed McDowell's division and another brigade ; condition of troops excellent. Received proceedings of court-martial sentencing a dozen men to death ; too severe and unjust.

Sept. 27. — . . . He (the President) sent a carriage for me to meet him and the cabinet at Gen. Scott's office. Before we got through the general "raised a row with me." I kept cool. In the course of the conversation he very strongly intimated that we were no longer friends. I said nothing, merely looked at him and bowed. He tried to avoid me when we left, but I walked square up to him, looked him fully in the eye, extended my hand, and said, "Good-morning, Gen. Scott." He had to take my hand, and so we parted. As he threw down the glove and I took it up, I presume war is declared. So be it. I have one strong point—that I do not care one iota for my present position.

Sept. —.—I started early in the day to be present at the presentation of colors to McCall's division by Gov. Curtin. It was long and fatiguing. I then rode over the Chain Bridge and back by Fort Corcoran. When I returned I had a great deal of tedious work to do and fell asleep in the midst of it. This morning I have had a siege with the Sanitary Committee, and don't think I will ride out to-day. How did you learn that Buckner and Smith have joined the rebel army ? I can hardly believe it. You have no idea how the men brighten up now when I go among them. I can see every eye glisten. Yesterday they nearly pulled me to pieces in one regiment. You never heard such yelling. Did I tell you that Lawrence Williams has been promoted and leaves my staff ? I do not in the least doubt his loyalty. I enclose a card just received from "A. Lincoln" ; it shows too much deference to be seen outside.

No date.—The enemy were stampeded this morning, and while

they were in terror I rapidly occupied all their positions and had the satisfaction of going out with our advance and seeing the last of their cavalry.

No date (Sept. 30?)—A most unhappy thing occurred last night among some of W. F. Smith's raw regiments. They three times mistook each other for the enemy and fired into each other. At least six were killed and several wounded, besides two horses were killed. It is dangerous to make night-marches on that account; but Smith's march was delayed by causes I could not foresee, and it was necessary to advance at all hazards. The manœuvring in advance by our flanks alarmed the enemy, whose centre at Munson's and Upton's was much advanced. As soon as our pickets informed me that he had fallen back I rushed forward and seized those very important points. We now hold them in strength and have at once proceeded to fortify them. The moral effect of this advance will be great, and it will have a bad influence on the troops of the enemy. They can no longer say that they are flaunting their dirty little flag in my face, and I hope they have taken their last look at Washington. . . .

CHAPTER VI.

The defence of Washington—Growth of an army—Foresight of the magnitude of the war—Memorandum to the President—Letter to Secretary Cameron.

REFERENCE to any good map will show that Washington is situated on the point of confluence of the main Potomac with the Anacostia, or eastern branch thereof. The ground occupied by the city is low, though by no means flat, and is commanded from all directions by heights within the easy range of even modern field-artillery.

Moral and political considerations alike rendered it necessary to retain the seat of government in Washington, although its situation was the most unfavorable that could be conceived under the circumstances of the case. So far as military operations were concerned, it would have been well could the capital have been removed to New York; but this was impossible. The defence of the capital, containing, as it did, the executive and legislative, the archives of the government, the public buildings, the honor and prestige of the nation, and, as time moved on, vast amounts of military supplies, was a matter of vital importance, and it was necessary to protect it not only from capture, but also against insult. To accomplish this without fortifications would have required an army of great strength, so large as to detract fatally from the efficiency of the active armies. It was, therefore, absolutely necessary to resort to fortifications, and circumstances required that they should be of a temporary nature.

As I have already stated, I found the capital entirely defenceless, and at once determined upon the system to be pursued.

During the months of August and September the work of organization and fortification proceeded as rapidly as circumstances permitted. Naturally there were frequent reports as to the movements of the enemy in advance; sometimes of intended

crossings below Alexandria, sometimes above the city. In the early part of August, when we were so entirely open to attack, these reports gave me no little uneasiness. And even after we had reached a point of comparative security, so far as the safety of Washington was concerned, the probable effects of an inroad in any form into Maryland rendered it necessary to be constantly on the alert and take every precaution to prevent a crossing of the river. As soon as Gen. Banks came under my command, Aug. 20, 1861, I directed him to cross to the eastern bank of the Monocacy, leaving one regiment to observe the Potomac above Harper's Ferry, and another to watch it from the latter place to the mouth of the Monocacy, and to put his main body not far from Hyattstown; thus placing him in position to oppose any attempt at crossing the river above Harper's Ferry, while his junction with the force at Washington would be secure of the enemy's crossing below the Monocacy. In his former position, at Sandy Hook, he was too far from Washington. He was ordered to move his surplus and heavy stores from Frederick to Baltimore or Washington, and his surplus transportation to the latter place; to oppose any passage of the Potomac by the enemy, provided it would not involve his separation from the main army; also to support Stone when necessary, and, if forced back by superior numbers, to retreat on Rockville. He was also instructed to protect the railroad as well as practicable without making too heavy detachments.

Up to this period, and until about the beginning of September, there was reason to apprehend some attack of the enemy; at all events, reports to that effect frequently arrived, and we were not for some time in condition to offer successful resistance.

It must never be forgotten that at this period the spirit of secession was active and bitter in many parts of Maryland. Baltimore had given too full proof of the feeling of a large part of its inhabitants of all classes; in the northern and western counties there were many secessionists, though the Union party was also strong; but in the southern and southeastern counties the Union people were very few. In this condition of affairs, with our communications and lines of supply all passing through Maryland, it was too dangerous to even allow small portions of the enemy to cross the river, and it was therefore

necessary to employ much larger numbers of troops on the frontier, on the line of communication, and in observation through the State than would have been the case if Pennsylvania, for example, had been the frontier State.

Before the middle of August Gen. Smith's pickets were thrown across the river at the Chain Bridge. On the 3d of Sept., while reviewing troops east of the Capitol, I received despatches to the effect that the enemy had appeared in force opposite the Chain Bridge and towards Great Falls; also that they were probably on the point of advancing along their whole line. After giving the necessary orders at other points I rode to Gen. Smith's headquarters at the Chain Bridge, and determined to move his brigade across the river during the night and to entrench a position on the Virginia side as the surest method of saving the bridge. I ordered up King's brigade and a battery to support him, and directed the cavalry and reserve artillery and other troops in the city to be held in readiness to move up if necessary. McCall was also ordered to send an additional regiment and two more guns to Great Falls, and to hold the rest of his command in readiness to move either towards Great Falls or the Chain Bridge, as circumstances might require. Early during the night Smith crossed and at once commenced the construction of Forts Maury and Ethan Allen—positions which I had already examined.

On the 28th of Sept. Smith's division marched out to Falls Church, which movement, in connection with an advance of a part of Franklin's division on the Leesburg pike, of McDowell's on Ball's cross-roads and Upton's Hill, and of Porter's on Hall's Hill, determined the evacuation of Munson's, Upton's, and Taylor's hills by the enemy's outposts, who had now seen the last of Washington until Early's raid in 1864.

Taylor's, Perkins's, Upton's, and Munson's hills were occupied by a brigade of McDowell's division, who at once commenced work upon the necessary fortifications. The occupation of this point was of great importance, as it gave ample room in rear for moving the troops in any direction, and, in the event of my deciding to attack Centreville, would enable me to reach that place in one march from the outposts. Immediately after the occupation of this new position the camp of Porter's division was moved forward to Hall's and Munson's hills, in easy supporting dis-

tance ; a few days later Smith's division was moved to Marshall's Hill. To support this movement McCall's division was, on the 9th of Oct., brought to the Virginia side to Langley's, and a few days later to Prospect Hill. He was replaced at Tennallytown by a brigade of Buell's division.

On the 5th of Oct. Heintzelman's division was formed, and posted at Fort Lyon, south of Alexandria, forming the left of our line on the Virginia side. During the months of September and October Sickles's brigade, posted on the south side of the eastern branch, sent frequent reconnoissances into lower Maryland.

Early in November Hooker's division was organized and moved to the vicinity of Budd's Ferry to observe the enemy, who were active in that direction, and to prevent, as far as possible, the crossing of the river by emissaries of the enemy. So that early in November the positions of the command were as follows :

On the right McCall's division at Prospect Hill ; Smith's division at Mackall's Hill, holding Lewinsville by an advanced guard ; Porter's division at Minor's and Hall's hills ; McDowell at Arlington, with one brigade at Munson's Hill, etc. ; Blenker's division at Hunter's Chapel ; Franklin at the Theological Seminary ; Heintzelman at Fort Lyon. There were thus on the Virginia side seven divisions, so posted as to cover every avenue of approach, and able to afford assistance to every point that could be attacked, and, moreover, in position to advance on Centreville if necessary. On the north of Washington, Buell's division held Tennallytown and the other important points (supported by Casey's provisional brigades), the reserve artillery and the cavalry depots ; while Stone's division at Poolesville, and Banks's division at Darnestown, observed the upper river and were in position to retire upon Washington if attacked by superior forces. Hooker was in the vicinity of Budd's Ferry. By the 30th of Sept. several of the principal works were pretty well advanced, but a great deal still remained to be done to complete the system.

I shall refer elsewhere to the inconveniences resulting from the position of Washington and the nature of the frontier formed by the Potomac ; in this place it will suffice to say that as the Potomac is often fordable, and many of the inhabitants on the

Maryland side were favorable to the enemy, it was a very necessary and difficult task to guard it properly.

In view of its exposed position and immense political importance it was impossible to allow Washington to be endangered ; so that a garrison was always necessary, and all that could be done was to make the fortifications so strong that a comparatively small garrison would suffice. After the experience of the first Bull Run the executive would never consent to leave Washington without a large garrison.

At this juncture it would have been wise to adopt a definite policy with regard to the regular army—viz., either virtually break it up, as a temporary measure, and distribute its members among the staff and regiments of the volunteer organization, thus giving the volunteers all possible benefit from the discipline and instruction of the regulars, or to fill the regular regiments to their full capacity and employ them as a reserve at critical junctures. I could not secure the adoption of either plan, and a middle course was followed which resulted less favorably than either of the plans indicated ; but it must be said that, even as things were, the regulars were in every way of immense benefit to the service. As a general rule the officers (and, of course, the non-commissioned officers) of the volunteer regiments were entirely ignorant of their duties, and many were unfitted, from their education, moral character, or mental deficiencies, for ever acquiring the requisite efficiency.

These latter were weeded out by courts-martial and boards of examination, while the others were instructed *pari passu* as they instructed their men. The small number of regular officers available rendered it impossible to furnish all the staff officers from among them ; so that a regiment was very fortunate if its colonel was a regular officer, and a brigade was lucky to have a regular as its commander. The generals were usually, and colonels always, obliged to appoint their staff officers from civil life, and instruct them as best they could. It speaks wonders for the intelligence and military aptitude of our people that so much was well done in this way on both sides. Many of these raw civilians, who were men of pride, intelligence, and education, soon became excellent officers ; though these very men most keenly regretted their lack of a good military education in early life.

The frequent reviews I held at Washington were not at all for

the benefit of the public, nor yet for the purpose of examining the individual condition of the men, although I did much of that even on these occasions—for a general with a quick eye can see things when riding at a gallop which would seem impossible to a civilian. But they were to accustom the regiments to move together and see each other, to give the troops an idea of their own strength, to infuse *esprit de corps* and mutual emulation, and to acquaint myself with the capacity of the general officers. These reviews also had a good effect in accustoming the troops to see me, although they saw so much of me in their camps and on the picket-lines that this was of minor importance. With new troops frequent reviews are of the greatest utility and produce the most excellent effect. Those I held did much towards making the Army of the Potomac what it became.

Some persons, who ought to have known better, have supposed that in organizing the Army of the Potomac I set too high a model before me and consumed unnecessary time in striving to form an army of regulars. This was an unjustifiable error on their part. I should, of course, have been glad to bring that army to the condition of regulars, but no one knew better than myself that, with the means at my command, that would have been impossible within any reasonable or permissible time.

What I strove for and accomplished was to bring about such a condition of discipline and instruction that the army could be handled on the march and on the field of battle, and that orders could be reasonably well carried out. No one cognizant of the circumstances and possessed of any knowledge of military affairs can honestly believe that I bestowed unnecessary time and labor upon the organization and instruction of that army whose courage, discipline, and efficiency finally brought the war to a close.

In spite of all the clamor to the contrary, the time spent in the camps of instruction in front of Washington was well bestowed, and produced the most important and valuable results. Not a day of it was wasted. The fortifications then erected, both directly and indirectly, saved the capital more than once in the course of the war, and enabled the army to manœuvre freely and independently. The organization and discipline then acquired, and so much improved during the campaign of the Peninsula which converted the men into veterans, enabled the army to pass gloriously through the many sanguinary conflicts and harassing

campaigns that proved necessary to terminate the war. They learned to gain victories and to withstand defeat. No other army we possessed could have met and defeated the Confederate Army of Northern Virginia. And, with all the courage, energy, and intelligence of the Army of the Potomac, it probably would not have been equal to that most difficult task without the advantage it enjoyed during its sojourn in the camps around Washington.

Early in August more or less trouble and discontent appeared among some of the regiments in relation to their term of service. In fact, many of those who enlisted during the first excitement had no expectation of engaging for a long war, and, when they found the three-months regiments returning home in large numbers, became much dissatisfied. In two cases this culminated in open mutiny on the part of large numbers of the officers and men. In the case of one regiment I brought them to order by directing the transportation of sixty-three of the number as prisoners to the Dry Tortugas, to labor there during the remainder of the war. In the case of the other the following order was issued :

Special Order No. 27.

HEADQUARTERS, DIVISION OF THE POTOMAC,
WASHINGTON, Aug. 14, 1861.

The general commanding this division learns with the utmost pain that decided insubordination, if not open mutiny, has been displayed by a large portion of the 79th regiment of N. Y. Volunteers. The general commanding does not desire, at this time, to enter into any statement of the alleged grievances of this regiment, further than to say that he has examined into them and finds that they are frivolous and unfounded. This conduct is disgraceful in the extreme, both as soldiers and citizens, to all concerned in it. Those who have participated in this shameful affair have utterly disgraced themselves ; they are unworthy of the sympathy of their fellow-soldiers, and in acting such a part at a time when the services of every true man are required by the nation they have rendered themselves liable to the suspicion that motives of the basest cowardice have controlled their conduct. This regiment has chosen to make the issue, and the commanding general is prepared to meet it. The regiment is ordered to return at once to its duty. All members of the regiment, whether officers or privates, who do not forthwith, on this order being read to them, return to duty will be required to lay down their arms and will be placed in arrest, and, refusing to do so, they

will be fired upon. Of those who obey the order and return to their duty the mutinous ringleaders will alone be punished.

The regiment will be deprived of its colors, which will not be returned until its members have shown by their conduct in camp that they have learned the first duty of soldiers—obedience—and have proved on the field of battle that they are not wanting in courage. A copy of this order, with the names of the officers and men implicated, will be sent to the governor of New York, to be filed among the State archives.

(Signed) GEO. B. McCLELLAN,
Maj.-Gen. Commanding.

The execution of this order was entrusted to Col. A. Porter, who took with him a battalion, a squadron, and a battery of regulars. They were drawn up in front of the mutineers, who promptly submitted. The ringleaders were placed in irons and the rest marched over to the Virginia side. In the course of a couple of months I was able to return their colors to this regiment as a reward for good conduct in camp and in several skirmishes. The regiment afterwards accompanied Sherman's expedition to Carolina and did good service. I think the trouble arose rather from poor officers than from the men.

As an additional means of preserving discipline, and to guard the camps from the presence of spies, the following order was issued :

General Order No. 4.

HEADQUARTERS, DIVISION OF THE POTOMAC,
WASHINGTON, Aug. 16, 1861.

All passes, safe-conducts, and permits heretofore given to enter or go beyond the lines of the United States army on the Virginia side of the Potomac are to be deemed revoked, and all such passes will emanate only from the War Department, the headquarters of the United States army or of this division, or from the provost-marshal at Washington. Similar passes will be required to cross the river by bridge or boat into Virginia. A strict military surveillance will be exercised within the lines of the army on the northern side of the Potomac, and upon all the avenues of every kind, by land and water, leading to and from the city of Washington, as well over persons holding passes as all others. Passes will not be required at or within the lines of the army north of the Potomac, but disloyal or suspected persons will be liable to arrest and detention until discharged by competent authority ; and contraband articles will be seized.

Officers and soldiers of the army will obtain passes as here-

tofore ordered. All complaints of improper seizures or searches made, or purporting to be made, under military authority will be received by the proper brigade commanders or provost-marshals, who will at once investigate the same, and in each instance make report to these headquarters.

By command of Maj.-Gen. McClellan.

(Signed)

S. WILLIAMS,
Asst. Adjt.-Gen.

In describing the steps taken toward the creation of the Army of the Potomac it will be well to begin with the Memorandum of Aug. 2, 1861, submitted to the President at his request. In my Report the date is erroneously given as of the 4th. This paper was necessarily prepared in great haste, as my time was fully occupied both by day and night with the incessant labors incident to my assumption of the command and the dangerous condition of affairs.

MEMORANDUM.

The object of the present war differs from those in which nations are usually engaged, mainly in this: that the purpose of ordinary war is to conquer a peace and make a treaty on advantageous terms; in this contest it has become necessary to crush a population sufficiently numerous, intelligent, and warlike to constitute a nation. We have not only to defeat their armed and organized forces in the field, but to display such an overwhelming strength as will convince all our antagonists, especially those of the governing, aristocratic class, of the utter impossibility of resistance. Our late reverses make this course imperative. Had we been successful in the recent battle (Manassas) it is possible that we might have been spared the labor and expense of a great effort; now we have no alternative. Their success will enable the political leaders of the rebels to convince the mass of their people that we are inferior to them in force and courage, and to command all their resources. The contest began with a class, now it is with a people; our military success can alone restore the former issue.

By thoroughly defeating their armies, taking their strong places, and pursuing a rigidly protective policy as to private property and unarmed persons, and a lenient course as to private soldiers, we may well hope for a permanent restoration of a peaceful Union. But in the first instance the authority of the government must be supported by overwhelming physical force.

Our foreign relations and financial credit also imperatively demand that the military action of the government should be prompt and irresistible.

The rebels have chosen Virginia as their battle-field, and it seems proper for us to make the first great struggle there. But while thus directing our main efforts, it is necessary to diminish the resistance there offered us by movements on other points both by land and water.

Without entering at present into details, I would advise that a strong movement be made on the Mississippi, and that the rebels be driven out of Missouri.

As soon as it becomes perfectly clear that Kentucky is cordially united with us, I would advise a movement through that State into Eastern Tennessee for the purpose of assisting the Union men of that region and of seizing the railroads leading from Memphis to the East.

The possession of those roads by us, in connection with the movement on the Mississippi, would go far towards determining the evacuation of Virginia by the rebels. In the meantime all the passes into Western Virginia from the East should be securely guarded, but I would advise no movement from that quarter towards Richmond, unless the political condition of Kentucky renders it impossible or inexpedient for us to make the movement upon Eastern Tennessee through that State. Every effort should, however, be made to organize, equip, and arm as many troops as possible in Western Virginia, in order to render the Ohio and Indiana regiments available for other operations.

At as early a day as practicable it would be well to protect and reopen the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad. Baltimore and Fort Monroe should be occupied by garrisons sufficient to retain them in our possession.

The importance of Harper's Ferry and the line of the Potomac in the direction of Leesburg will be very materially diminished so soon as our force in this vicinity becomes organized, strong, and efficient, because no capable general will cross the river north of this city when we have a strong army here ready to cut off his retreat.

To revert to the West, it is probable that no very large additions to the troops now in Missouri will be necessary to secure that State.

I presume that the force required for the movement down the Mississippi will be determined by its commander and the President. If Kentucky assumes the right position not more than 20,000 will be needed, together with those that can be raised in that State and Eastern Tennessee to secure the latter region and its railroads, as well as ultimately to occupy Nashville.

The Western Virginia troops, with not more than five to ten thousand from Ohio and Indiana, should, under proper management, suffice for its protection.

When we have reorganized our main army here 10,000 men ought to be enough to protect the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad

and the Potomac; 5,000 will garrison Baltimore, 3,000 Fort Monroe, and not more than 20,000 will be necessary at the utmost for the defence of Washington.

For the main army of operations I urge the following composition:

250 regiments of infantry, say,	. . . . .	225,000 men.
100 field-batteries, 600 guns,	. . . . .	15,000 "
28 regiments of cavalry,	. . . . .	25,500 "
5 regiments engineer troops,	. . . . .	7,500 "
<hr/>		
Total,	. . . . .	273,000 "

The force must be supplied with the necessary engineer and pontoon trains, and with transportation for everything save tents. Its general line of operations should be so directed that water-transportation can be availed of from point to point by means of the ocean and the rivers emptying into it. An essential feature of the plan of operations will be the employment of a strong naval force to protect the movement of a fleet of transports intended to convey a considerable body of troops from point to point of the enemy's sea-coast, thus either creating diversions and rendering it necessary for them to detach largely from their main body in order to protect such of their cities as may be threatened, or else landing and forming establishments on their coast at any favorable places that opportunity might offer. This naval force should also co-operate with the main army in its efforts to seize the important seaboard towns of the rebels.

It cannot be ignored that the construction of railroads has introduced a new and very important element into war, by the great facilities thus given for concentrating at particular positions large masses of troops from remote sections, and by creating new strategic points and lines of operations.

It is intended to overcome this difficulty by the partial operations suggested, and such other as the particular case may require. We must endeavor to seize places on the railways in the rear of the enemy's points of concentration, and we must threaten their seaboard cities, in order that each State may be forced, by the necessity of its own defence, to diminish its contingent to the Confederate army.

The proposed movement down the Mississippi will produce important results in this connection. That advance and the progress of the main army at the East will materially assist each other by diminishing the resistance to be encountered by each.

The tendency of the Mississippi movement upon all questions connected with cotton is too well understood by the President and cabinet to need any illustration from me.

There is another independent movement that has often been

suggested and which has always recommended itself to my judgment. I refer to a movement from Kansas and Nebraska through the Indian Territory upon Red river and Western Texas for the purpose of protecting and developing the latent Union and free-State sentiment well known to predominate in Western Texas, and which, like a similar sentiment in Western Virginia, will, if protected, ultimately organize that section into a free State. How far it will be possible to support this movement by an advance through New Mexico from California is a matter which I have not sufficiently examined to be able to express a decided opinion. If at all practicable, it is eminently desirable, as bringing into play the resources and warlike qualities of the Pacific States, as well as identifying them with our cause and connecting the bond of union between them and the general government.

If it is not departing too far from my province, I will venture to suggest the policy of an ultimate alliance and cordial understanding with Mexico; their sympathies and interests are with us, their antipathies exclusively against our enemies and their institutions. I think it would not be difficult to obtain from the Mexican government the right to use, at least during the present contest, the road from Guaymas to New Mexico; this concession would very materially reduce the obstacles of the column moving from the Pacific. A similar permission to use their territory for the passage of troops between the Panuco and the Rio Grande would enable us to throw a column of troops by a good road from Tampico, or some of the small harbors north of it, upon and across the Rio Grande, without risk and scarcely firing a shot.

To what extent, if any, it would be desirable to take into service and employ Mexican soldiers is a question entirely political, on which I do not venture to offer an opinion.

The force I have recommended is large; the expense is great. It is possible that a smaller force might accomplish the object in view, but I understand it to be the purpose of this great nation to re-establish the power of its government and restore peace to its citizens in the shortest possible time.

The question to be decided is simply this: Shall we crush the rebellion at one blow, terminate the war in one campaign, or shall we leave it as a legacy for our descendants?

When the extent of the possible line of operations is considered, the force asked for for the main army under my command cannot be regarded as unduly large; every mile we advance carries us further from our base of operations and renders detachments necessary to cover our communications, while the enemy will be constantly concentrating as he falls back. I propose, with the force which I have requested, not only to drive the enemy out of Virginia and occupy Richmond, but to occupy Charleston, Savannah, Montgomery, Pensacola,

Mobile, and New Orleans ; in other words, to move into the heart of the enemy's country and crush the rebellion in its very heart.

By seizing and repairing the railroads as we advance the difficulties of transportation will be materially diminished. It is perhaps unnecessary to state that, in addition to the forces named in this memorandum, strong reserves should be formed, ready to supply any losses that may occur.

In conclusion, I would submit that the exigencies of the treasury may be lessened by making only partial payments to our troops when in the enemy's country, and by giving the obligations of the United States for such supplies as may there be obtained.

GEO. B. McCLELLAN.

Maj.-Gen.

In the light of the experience of the twenty-two years which have elapsed since this Memorandum was so hastily prepared, and after full consideration of all the events of the long and bloody war which followed it, I still hold to the soundness of the views it expressed. Had the measures recommended been carried into effect the war would have been closed in less than one-half the time and with infinite saving of blood and treasure. So far as I know, it was the first general plan of operations proposed upon a scale adequate to the case. It recognized the importance of railways as a new element in strategy ; it emphasized the vital importance of the railway system leading from Memphis to the East ; it marked out the advantages to be derived from coast expeditions ; it stated the part to be played upon the Mississippi ; it foreshadowed the marches upon Atlanta and the sea-coast ; it called for a force which the future proved to be fully within our means, and which would have crushed the rebellion in one or two campaigns.

In this connection I would refer to the letters written by me to Gen. Scott from Columbus in April and May of 1861.

The following was received Sept. 7 and answered Sept. 8 :

"GENERAL : It is evident that we are on the eve of a great battle—one that may decide the fate of the country. Its success must depend on you and the means that may be placed at your disposal. Impressed with this belief, and anxious to aid you with all the power of my department, I will be glad if you will inform me how I can do so. Very truly yours,

"7th Sept., 1861.

SIMON CAMERON.

"MAJ.-GEN. McCLELLAN."

HEADQUARTERS, ARMY OF THE POTOMAC,
WASHINGTON, Sept. 8, 1861.*Hon. Simon Cameron, Secretary of War :*

SIR : Your note of to-day is received. I concur in your views as to the exigency of the present occasion. I appreciate and cordially thank you for your offers of support, and will avail myself of them to the fullest extent demanded by the interests of the country. The force of all arms within the immediate vicinity of Washington is nearly 85,000 men. The effective portion of this force is more than sufficient to resist with certain success any attacks on our works upon the other side of the river. By calling in the commands of Gens. Banks and Stone it will probably be sufficient to defend the city of Washington from whatever direction it may be assailed. It is well understood that, although the ultimate design of the enemy is to possess himself of the city of Washington, his first efforts will be directed towards Baltimore, with the intention of cutting our line of communication and supplies, as well as to arouse an insurrection in Maryland. To accomplish this he will no doubt show a certain portion of his force in front of our positions on the other side of the Potomac, in order to engage our attention there and induce us to leave a large portion of our force for the defence of those positions. He will probably also make demonstrations in the vicinity of Acquia Creek, Mathias Point, and the Occoquan, in order still further to induce us to disseminate our forces. His main and real movement will doubtless be to cross the Potomac between Washington and Point of Rocks, probably not far from Seneca Mills, and most likely at more points than one. His hope will be so to engage our attention by the diversions already named as to enable him to move with a large force direct and unopposed on Baltimore. I see no reason to doubt the possibility of his attempting this with a column of at least 100,000 effective troops. If he has only 130,000 under arms, he can make all the diversions I have mentioned with his raw and badly organized troops, leaving 100,000 effective men for his real movement. As I am now situated I can by no possibility bring to bear against this column more than 70,000, and probably not over 60,000, effective troops.

In regard to the composition of our active army, it must be borne in mind that the very important arms of cavalry and artillery had been almost entirely neglected until I assumed command of this army, and that consequently the troops of these arms, although greatly increased in numbers, are comparatively raw and inexperienced, most of the cavalry not being yet armed or equipped. In making the foregoing estimate of numbers I have reduced the enemy's force below what is regarded by the War Department and other official circles as its real strength, and have taken the reverse course as to our own. Our situation,

then, is simply this: if the commander-in-chief of the enemy follows the simplest dictates of the military art we must meet him with greatly inferior forces. To render success possible the divisions of our army must be more ably led and commanded than those of the enemy. The fate of the nation and the success of the cause in which we are engaged must be mainly decided by the issue of the next battle to be fought by the army now under my command. I therefore feel that the interests of the nation demand that the ablest soldiers in the service should be on duty with the Army of the Potomac, and that, contenting ourselves with remaining on the defensive for the present at all other points, this army should at once be reinforced by all the effective troops that the East and West and North can furnish. In view of these facts I respectfully urge that all the available troops in Ohio, Indiana, Michigan, Wisconsin, and at least ten thousand Illinois troops (there being fifteen thousand there unarmed), and all those of the Eastern and Northern States, be at once directed to report to me for duty. I beg leave to repeat the opinion I have heretofore expressed: that the Army of the Potomac should number not less than three hundred thousand men in order to insure complete success and an early termination of the war. I also request that Brig.-Gens. Don Carlos Buell and J. F. Reynolds—both appointed upon my recommendation and for the purpose of serving with me—be at once assigned to duty with this army; also that no general officer appointed upon my recommendation shall be assigned away from this army without my consent; that I shall have full control of all officers and troops within this department; and that no one, whatever his rank may be, shall give any orders respecting my command without my being first consulted. Otherwise it is evident that I cannot be responsible for the success of our arms.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

GEO. B. McCLELLAN,
Maj.-Gen. U. S. A.

CHAPTER VII.

Organization of the army—What an army is—Infantry, artillery, cavalry, engineer troops—The staff and its departments—Details of the creation of the Army of the Potomac.

THE organized armies of modern times consist of two well-defined parts: the fighting force, or "line," and "the staff," which directs, inspects, and supplies the former. The line is made up of infantry, artillery, cavalry, and engineer troops.

AS INFANTRY can move wherever a man can set his foot, can fight on all kinds of ground, gives the most destructive fire of all the arms, and is the least expensive and most easily instructed, it constitutes the great bulk of all large armies, and is decidedly the most important.

With equally good generals, that army which has the best infantry is pretty sure to win, for no reasonable superiority in the other arms of service can compensate for marked inferiority in the infantry.

The essential qualities of good infantry are: the ability to make long marches, with their full equipment, without straggling; accuracy of fire; confidence in their ability to use the bayonet—for this will prevent their breaking upon the very near approach of a hostile line—coolness, intelligence, determination, and mutual confidence in attacking or receiving an attack; the ability to reform rapidly after a successful attack, and to rally when driven back, either after a repulsed attack or when obliged to retreat from a defensive position; the power of enduring fatigue, exposure, and hunger.

Next in importance is the ARTILLERY, whose work it is to open the way for, and cover the movements of, the other arms by destroying the enemy's defences at long range, silencing his artillery, and demoralizing his infantry; or, at short ranges, to crush them by a rapid fire of case and shrapnel. It is also a part of its duty to cover the retreat of beaten infantry, and to assist in the operations of detached bodies of cavalry.

There is thus heavy artillery, whose business it is to handle siege-guns and those used in permanent defences, and field-artillery, who accompany an army in the field. Field-artillery is made up of three kinds—viz., the mounted batteries, whose cannoneers usually march on foot, but during rapid movements ride upon the carriages and caissons, and which serve with the regiment, division, and army corps; the horse-batteries, whose cannoneers are provided with saddle-horses, and which are especially intended for service with the cavalry; and the batteries of position, consisting of the heaviest field-guns, intended especially for action against the enemy's material defences.

The field-guns, at the period of which I write, were generally provided in the ratio of at least two and a half guns to each thousand infantry, and three or four guns to each thousand cavalry, the exact proportion depending somewhat on the nature of the field of war and the quality of the troops. With raw troops a somewhat larger proportion is necessary than with veterans.

The technical information necessary for the artillery officers and men renders it difficult to improvise thoroughly efficient artillery.

The CAVALRY is an indispensable part of every army. It not only takes part, as occasion demands, in general battles, but, with a due proportion of horse-artillery, is capable of independent action, even at long distances from the main body of the army. Upon it devolves to a great extent the duty of observing and discovering the positions, movements, and strength of the enemy, as well as masking those of its own army. It is capable of making extensive inroads into the enemy's country, and is usually employed to threaten and attack his communications, supply-trains, etc. The modern improvements in firearms have certainly affected the employment of cavalry on the field of battle against infantry and artillery, but have not lessened the importance of its other duties. Nor is it probable that the number of these arms will in the future be materially diminished. The employment of breech-loading small arms has added very much to the strength of cavalry, and it is certain that in future wars large bodies of cavalry will be employed as mounted infantry. That is, they will use their horses to move rapidly to the point of action, and fight on foot. Under ordinary circumstances it has usually been re-

garded as advisable to furnish cavalry to the extent of one-sixth to one-eighth of the infantry force.

To render cavalry efficient it is necessary that the officers and men should be of a superior order of intelligence, and that they should fully understand the care of their horses, which should be active and enduring. Officers and men should be excellent horsemen, skilful in the use of their weapons, and thoroughly instructed in the work of reconnoissance. It is really much more difficult to form reliable cavalry at short notice than to instruct artillery and infantry.

It is the duty of ENGINEER TROOPS to conduct siege operations; to supervise and construct temporary defences and the works for their attack; to construct, repair, and destroy bridges of all kinds, fords, roads, etc. The repair and destruction of railways should also be under their direction. The performance of these duties requires a superior order of men, skilled in some mechanical trade, and needs careful instruction. In ordinary cases the engineer troops should number about one-fortieth of the infantry.

To direct the movements and supply the wants of the combatants is the business of THE STAFF, which in modern armies is a complicated and extensive organization. It includes:

1st. The Adjutant-General's Department.

This department issues, in the name of the commander, all orders relating to the discipline, instruction, movements, and supply of the troops, whether directly to the fighting organization or to the other staff corps; and through it pass to the commander all written reports on such subjects. It has direct charge of all returns relating to the force and condition of the command, and to it all such returns are directed.

2d. The Inspector-General's Department.

To this department is committed the work of ascertaining by rigid and careful inspection the exact condition of the various elements comprising the command; verifying returns and reports; ascertaining the exact state of discipline, instruction, morale, and general efficiency; the number present for duty; the observation of sanitary rules; the quantity and condition of transportation, arms, ammunition, equipment, clothing, food,

medical stores, etc. As so much depends upon the faithful and intelligent discharge of these very important duties, it is absolutely necessary that the officers of this corps should be thoroughly instructed soldiers of long experience, the highest integrity, the greatest intelligence, with great industry and method in the performance of these duties.

3d. Aides-de-Camp.

These constitute the personal staff of the general to whom they are attached. They carry his orders and watch over their execution. They should be thorough soldiers, of great activity, intelligence, and devotion.

4th. The Engineers.

In our service the conduct of reconnoissances falls chiefly upon them; the selection of positions, especially for defence; the conduct of all siege operations, and the construction of all field-works, temporary defences, bridges, roads, etc.

On the part of these officers the most thorough knowledge of the highest branches of the profession, accurate judgment of ground, and great intelligence are required. They cannot successfully be improvised.

5th. The Quartermaster's Department.

Upon this department devolves the purchase of horses for all military purposes, the providing of all means of transportation, ambulances, litters, the supply of clothing, camp equipage, cooking utensils, the forage for animals, the conduct of supply-trains, and, in fact, providing all material that is not especially assigned to some other department.

6th. The Commissary Department.

It is the duty of this department to provide and have ready for issue at the proper time and place all articles of food required by the army. The task of this department is often very difficult and of the greatest possible importance, for upon its proper performance the success of the army depends.

7th The Medical Department.

Upon this department devolves the general charge of the

sanitary condition of troops in camps and on the march; the care of the sick and wounded; the use of ambulances and litters; the providing of medical stores and comforts; the installation and direction of all military hospitals.

8th. The Ordnance Corps.

This corps furnishes all arms, ammunition, artillery carriages and harness, cavalry equipment, and makes in the field all repairs which cannot be executed by the armorers and mechanics of the regiments of the line.

9th. The Pay Department.

Its duty is to pay the troops at proper times.

10th. The Department of Military Justice.

It has the supervision of all proceedings by court-martial, military commission, etc.

11th. The Signal Corps.

It is in charge of the various systems of communicating intelligence by signals, telegraph, balloons, etc.

In large armies, with numerous staff corps charged with such manifold and important duties, it has been found necessary to establish the position of CHIEF OF STAFF, who might supervise and co-ordinate the various branches, and thus relieve the commanding general from a multiplicity of detail. This office, found in all European armies, had never been established in our own. I soon found it necessary for the Army of the Potomac. The officer holding such a confidential relation with his commander should always be a man possessing the latter's entire confidence. I therefore selected for this place Col. R. B. Marcy, inspector-general of the army, whose rank was also superior to that of all the staff officers on duty with the Army of the Potomac.

My orders for the movements and fighting of the troops were generally issued through the chief of staff.

One of my earliest measures was the formation of permanent BRIGADES of infantry. The new levies of infantry, upon their arrival in Washington, were formed into provisional brigades and placed in camps in the suburbs on the Maryland

side of the river, for equipment, instruction, and discipline. As soon as regiments were in fit condition for transfer to the forces across the Potomac they were assigned to the brigades serving there. Brig.-Gen. F. J. Porter was at first assigned to the charge of the provisional brigades. Brig.-Gen. A. E. Burnside was the next officer assigned this duty, from which, however, he was soon relieved by Brig.-Gen. Casey, who continued in charge of the newly arriving regiments until the Army of the Potomac departed for the Peninsula, in March, 1862. The newly arriving artillery troops reported to Brig.-Gen. William F. Barry, the chief of artillery, and the cavalry to Brig.-Gen. George Stoneman, the chief of cavalry, and were also retained on the Maryland side until their equipment and armament were essentially completed and some rudimentary instruction obtained.

A few days after reaching Washington Gen. Scott asked me what I intended to do in the way of organization. I replied that I wished the force under my command to be organized as and denominated an army instead of a geographical division; that I should first form brigades, then divisions, and, when in the field, army corps. My reason for postponing the formation of the latter was that with untried general officers it would be too dangerous an experiment to appoint any to such high and important commands without first proving them in actual campaign and in battle.

He objected to all I proposed, save the brigade formation, saying that under our system and regulations it would be impossible to administer the affairs of an "army," and that the retention of the system and nomenclature of geographical divisions and departments was an absolute necessity; he also objected to the formation of divisions as unnecessary, for the reason that in Mexico he had only brigades.

I called to his attention the fact that, all the world over, fighting forces were organized as armies; that I had done so in West Virginia; and that his force in Mexico was a very small affair in comparison with that soon to be collected in front of Washington. He did not change his views. So I quietly went to work in my own way. The result was that on the 20th of Aug. the order constituting the ARMY OF THE POTOMAC was issued; and in addition to the two departments originally under my command, the troops in the Shenandoah, Maryland, and Dela-

ware were also included in the Army of the Potomac, the old departments being broken up and merged in the newly created army. Thus I had command of all the troops on the line of the Potomac and as far to the rear as Baltimore and Fort Delaware.

During the first days of August I procured the passage of an act authorizing the appointment of additional aides-de-camp to general officers; these might be taken from civil life or from the army, and were to be of no higher grade than that of colonel. I used this law not only to furnish the requisite number of actual aides-de-camp, but also to give additional pay and rank in the regular army to officers whose duty made such a step necessary. For instance, I gave to Maj. Barry, chief of artillery, and to Maj. H. J. Hunt, commanding the reserve artillery, the grade of colonel; to Van Vliet and Clarke the same. When the organization of the brigades was well established, and the troops somewhat disciplined and instructed, divisions of three brigades each were gradually formed.

I intended to compose each division of three infantry brigades of four regiments each, four batteries, and one regiment of cavalry, which would have given a nominal strength of 12,000 infantry, 1,000 cavalry, and 24 guns, or an effective of about 10,000 infantry, 700 cavalry, and 24 guns. It was determined to collect whatever regular infantry could be obtained to form the nucleus of a reserve. The measures taken for recruiting these regiments were so insufficient and the results so meagre that as late as the 30th of April, 1862, there were only 4,600 men in the 71 companies, regular infantry, on duty with the Army of the Potomac. These, together with the 5th and 10th N. Y. Volunteers, finally formed part of the 5th corps as a division under Brig.-Gen. Sykes, 3d U. S. Infantry.

The creation of an adequate ARTILLERY establishment for an army of so large proportions was a formidable undertaking; and had it not been that the country possessed in the regular service a body of accomplished and energetic artillery officers, the task would have been almost hopeless.

The charge of organizing this most important arm was confided to Maj. (afterwards Brig.-Gen.) William F. Barry, chief of artillery, whose industry and zeal achieved the best results. The following principles were adopted as the basis of organization:

1. That the proportion of artillery should be in the proportion of at least two and one-half pieces to 1,000 men, to be expanded, if possible, to three pieces to 1,000 men.

2. That the proportion of rifled guns should be restricted to the system of the United States ordnance department; and of Parrott and the "smooth-bores" (with the exception of a few howitzers for special service) to be exclusively the 12-pounder gun, of the model of 1857, variously called the "gun-howitzer," the "light twelve-pounder," or the "Napoleon."

3. That each field-battery should, if practicable, be composed of six guns, and none to be less than four guns, and in all cases the guns of each battery should be of uniform calibre.

4. That the field-batteries were to be assigned to divisions, and not to brigades, and in the proportion of four to each division, of which one was to be a battery of regulars, the remainder of volunteers, the captain of the regular battery to be the commandant of artillery of the division. In the event of several divisions constituting an army corps, at least one-half of the divisional artillery was to constitute the reserve artillery of the corps.

5. That the artillery reserve of the whole army should consist of 100 guns, and should comprise, besides a sufficient number of light "mounted batteries," all the guns of position, and, until the cavalry were massed, all the horse-artillery.

6. That the amount of ammunition to accompany field-batteries was not to be less than 400 rounds per gun.

7. A siege-train of 50 pieces. This was subsequently expanded, for special service at the siege of Yorktown, to very nearly 100 pieces, and comprised the unusual calibres and enormously heavy weight of metal of two 200-pounders, five 100-pounders, and ten 13-inch sea-coast mortars.

As has been before stated, the whole of the field-artillery of the Army of the Potomac, July 28, 1861, was comprised of 9 imperfectly equipped batteries of 30 guns, 650 men, and 400 horses. In March, 1862, when the whole army took the field, it consisted of 92 batteries of 520 guns, 12,500 men, and 11,000 horses, fully equipped and in readiness for active field service; of the whole force 30 batteries were regulars and 62 batteries volunteers. During the short period of seven months all of this immense amount of material was manufactured or purchased, and issued by the ordnance department and placed in the hands of the art-

lery troops after their arrival in Washington. About one-fourth of all the volunteer batteries brought with them from their respective States a few guns and carriages, but they were nearly all of such peculiar calibre as to lack uniformity with the more modern and more serviceable ordnance with which the other batteries were armed, and they therefore had to be withdrawn and replaced by more suitable material. While about one-sixth came supplied with horses and harness, less than one-tenth were apparently fully equipped for service when they reported; and every one even of these required the supply of many deficiencies of material, and very extensive instruction in the theory and practice of their special arm.

The operations on the Peninsula by the Army of the Potomac commenced with a full field-artillery force of 49 batteries of 274 guns. To this must be added the field-artillery of Franklin's division of McDowell's corps, which joined a few days before the capture of Yorktown, but was not disembarked from its transports for service until after the battle of Williamsburg, and the field-artillery of McCall's division of McDowell's corps (4 batteries, 22 guns), which joined in June, a few days before the battle of Mechanicsville (June 26, 1862), making a grand total of field-artillery at any time with the army of the peninsula of 57 batteries of 318 guns.

When there were so many newly organized volunteer field-batteries, many of whom received their first and only instruction in the entrenched camps covering Washington during the three or four inclement months of the winter of 1861-62, there was, of course, much to be improved. Many of the volunteer batteries, however, evinced such zeal and intelligence, and availed themselves so industriously of the instructions of the regular officers, their commanders, and the example of the regular batteries, their associates, that they made rapid progress and attained a degree of proficiency highly creditable.

Gen. Barry served as chief of artillery with the Army of the Potomac until the close of the Peninsular campaign; he performed his duties with great zeal, patience, and ability. The artillery reserve was originally commanded by Col. H. J. Hunt, who gave up the command only when appointed chief of artillery in place of Gen. Barry. The artillery reserve was then commanded by Col. George W. Getty, an excellent officer.

Gen. Hunt retained the position of chief of artillery until the close of the war. I regarded him as the best living commander of field-artillery. He was a man of the utmost coolness in danger, thoroughly versed in his profession, an admirable organizer, a soldier of a very high order. As I write this (July, 1882) Hunt is likely to be retired as a colonel—a man whose services in any other army would have been rewarded by titles, high rank, and ample pension. He is one of the most marked instances within my knowledge of the highest merit and services passed over unacknowledged and unrewarded.

Hunt's merits consisted not only in organizing his command to the best advantage, but in using it on the field of battle with the utmost skill and power. The services of this most distinguished officer in reorganizing and refitting the batteries prior to and after Antietam, his gallant and skilful conduct on that field, at Malvern, and in fact during the whole Peninsular campaign, merit the highest encomiums in my power to bestow.

The country in which operations were to be conducted was so obstructed by forests as to present few favorable opportunities for the employment of long-range artillery. I therefore desired to compose the artillery two-thirds of the Napoleon gun—a light 12-pounder—and one-third of rifled guns. But the facilities for the construction of army guns were so limited, while those for iron guns were comparatively so great, that in the first armament it was impossible to observe these proportions, so that when the army took the field less than one-third were Napoleon guns, and it was only during the reorganization for the Antietam campaign that it was possible to approach the proportions originally fixed upon. Our experience in battle proved the correctness of these views. The shrapnel and canister from the Napoleons was always most destructive to the hostile infantry at close range. We seldom saw the enemy at long range in large bodies.

On the 20th of Aug., 1861, I had 80 guns. The returns of Oct. 15 show that there were 27 batteries of divisional artillery. Of these 17 were regulars and 10 volunteers, and, as several had only 4 guns, there were not more than 140 guns in all, and of these the rifled guns composed a good deal more than two-thirds.

Including Banks and Dix, there were 33 batteries, of which 19 regulars and 14 volunteers, making not over 168 guns in all, to a force of 143,647 present on Oct. 15, and out of these guns must

be provided those required for the garrisons of Washington and Baltimore, and the defences of the line of the Potomac.

In regard to the 140 guns, they belonged to a force of about 120,000 men, and out of the number would come those required for the garrison of Washington and the defences of the Potomac.

It was not until after this date that artillery material and equipment flowed in with any considerable rapidity, so that, even disregarding the question of instruction, it was not until after the season for active operations had passed that a sufficient number of equipped batteries were disposable to finish the requisite reserve and divisional artillery. The mass of the artillery was not in condition to move until the following April, and even then several of the volunteer batteries were deficient in instruction.

The difficulties attending the organization of a suitable CAV-ALRY FORCE were very great, and it cannot be said that they were ever satisfactorily overcome.

The newly arriving regiments reported to Gen. Stoneman, the chief of cavalry, and, as with the artillery and infantry, were, as far as circumstances would permit, retained for a certain time on the north bank of the Potomac. There was at first a total lack of equipment for the cavalry, and it was very long before this difficulty was removed. So great was the lack of cavalry arms that I was obliged to organize Rush's regiment (6th Penn.) as lancers, it being impossible to provide other weapons.

Many of the officers and men were quite ignorant of the management of horses, and could not even ride well. Moreover, there was too little appreciation on the part of the government of the necessity and advantages of that arm of service. With the cavalry, as with the other arms of service, every effort was made to weed out inefficient and incompetent officers by means of courts-martial and boards of examination.

As rapidly as possible every cavalry soldier was armed with a sabre and revolver, and at least two squadrons in each regiment with the carbine.*

It was intended to assign at least one regiment of cavalry to each infantry division so long as the division organization was the highest, and, when army corps should be formed, to attach

* On the margin of his manuscript Gen. McClellan has written, "Here note experience in West Virginia."

a strong brigade of cavalry to its headquarters, leaving with the division only enough for the necessary duty ; also to form a general cavalry reserve. On the 15th of Oct. there were serving with the Army of the Potomac, including General Banks's command, one regiment and two companies of regular cavalry, and eleven regiments of volunteer cavalry. When the army took the field there were on its rolls four regiments and two companies of regular cavalry, eighteen regiments and five companies of volunteer cavalry, besides four regiments yet unprovided with horses.

Of these there went to the Peninsula the regulars and four regiments and five companies of volunteers, making eight regiments and seven companies ; and there remained with Gen. Banks and at Washington twenty-one regiments, besides the four unprovided with horses. Circumstances beyond my control rendered it impossible for me to carry out my views as to the cavalry, and it was entirely against my wishes and judgment that I was left in the field with so small a force of this arm. Of the field force one regiment of regulars were necessarily employed on provost duty, and two companies of regulars and one of volunteers at headquarters, leaving only three regiments of regulars and four regiments and four companies of volunteers, certainly not over four thousand men at most, to do all the cavalry and mounted orderly duty for the army of eleven divisions—a force so ridiculously insufficient, less than one-fourth of what it should have been, as to render it strange that the enemy contented themselves with riding around our lines only once on the Peninsula.

As there were but three weak companies of ENGINEER TROOPS available, I did the best in my power to supply the deficiency by detailing as volunteer engineer troops the 15th and 50th N. Y. Volunteers, which comprised an unusual number of sailors and mechanics in their ranks. These were formed into an engineer brigade, and placed under the command, first of Col. B. S. Alexander, U. S. Corps of Engineers, and finally under that of Col. D. V. Woodbury, of the same corps. These regiments rendered good service as engineer troops, and at length became admirable pontoniers, as their services under fire more than once testified.

We had no bridge trains whatever, for the remains of the India-rubber pontoon trains constructed for the Mexican war were of no possible use. Therefore I gave directions for the construction of trains on the model of the latest French bridge.

Capt. Duane, commanding the battalion of regular engineer troops, was charged with this duty, as well as the preparation of the other engineer trains. Capt. Duane performed this duty, as he did all that was assigned to him, in the most satisfactory manner. He on all occasions proved himself an admirable soldier and most excellent engineer.

As already stated, I found it necessary to create the office of CHIEF OF STAFF, and selected Col. R. B. Marcy for the place.

One of the greatest defects in our military system is the lack of a thoroughly instructed STAFF CORPS, from which should be furnished chief of staff of armies, army corps and divisions, adjutant-general, and aides-de-camp and recruiting officers. Perhaps the greatest difficulty that I encountered in the work of creating the Army of the Potomac arose from the scarcity of thoroughly instructed staff officers, and I must frankly state that every day I myself felt the disadvantages under which I personally labored from the want of that thorough theoretical and practical education received by the officers of the German general staff.

Under our system of government, and in the circumstances which surround us, it is perhaps impossible, certainly very improbable, that this most vital point can ever be satisfactorily covered. Political and personal considerations now control so completely the appointment to places in the various branches of the staff that the chances are against their being filled by the most competent men. In fact, judging from the experience of the past few years, it is almost a certainty that incompetent men will be selected for these most important positions. Inefficiency and waste must surely result from our present system, even in times of peace; but in the event of our being thrown into collision with a well-organized European army, the results will be disastrous. Should we ever have a Secretary of War who understands his business and possesses the full support of the administration and of Congress, the work may be done. But even if commenced in the right way, the danger would be that in the course of time presidents would appoint to the corps political or personal favorites, unless the law so hedged in the corps that appointments could only be made upon the recommendation of the chief of the corps and a board of its officers after a proper test of their qualifications. I am very sure that every general officer who served in the late war will agree with me that his

labors would have been immensely lightened and the efficiency of his command very much increased if he could have had a competent staff at his disposal.

In comparison with the difficulties of the work that fell to my lot the task of a general officer of the German army seems mere child's play. None of the officers at my disposal had ever seen large armies or the operations of war on a grand scale. Those who came from West Point had a good education, so far as the theory of war was concerned. That was a great advantage, but by no means all that was required. Those whom I selected were usually comparatively young men, and, under my direction, soon grasped the situation ; but one very great obstacle arose from the incompetence of many of the permanent heads of departments, who found it very difficult to get out of the ruts in which they had been accustomed to move. To pass suddenly from the small scale on which the affairs of an army of 10,000 men in time of peace had been conducted, to that required for an army of half a million in the midst of a desperate war, was no easy task.

I have dwelt somewhat at length on this subject in order to accentuate the difficulties of the position, and to show that the time consumed in organizing the Army of the Potomac was far from unreasonable.

During the war many improvements were made in the details of the administration of the staff corps ; but unfortunately no change whatever has been made in the organization of the various departments, and their only gain by the war is in the personal experience of the officers who served therein. When they have passed away there will be little or no trace left of the experience of the war.

Our own experience, and that of other armies, agree in determining the necessity for an efficient and able staff. To obtain this our staff establishment should be based on correct principles, and extended to be adequate to the necessities of the service, and should include a system of staff and line education.

Moreover, the officers of the staff should be required occasionally to serve with troops as officers of the line, and when the turn of each comes for promotion it should be determined not only whether he is fit for promotion, but whether he is fit to remain in the corps.

[The following memorandum by Gen. McClellan was found lying among his manuscript at this point:]

General Staff Corps.—Abolish the adjutant-general and inspector-general's departments, and merge their functions in those of the general staff corps. Make the chief of the general staff a major-general, and let the corps be composed somewhat as follows, viz.:

1. The major-general.
 - One brigadier-general, to perform the present duties of adjutant-general.
2. One brigadier-general, to perform the present duties of inspector-general, etc.
 - One colonel, assistant to the chief.
8. One colonel, in charge of the department of military inspection (maps), statistics, etc.
 - Two colonels, inspection duty.
 - Two colonels, assistant adjutant-generals.
 - Two colonels, aides-de-camp.
11. One lieutenant-colonel, assistant to chief.
 - One lieutenant-colonel, military statistics.
 - Two lieutenant-colonels, inspection duty.
 - Four lieutenant-colonels, assistant adjutant-generals.
 - Three lieutenant-colonels, aides-de-camp.
19. Four majors, inspection duty.
 - Eight majors, assistant adjutant-generals.
 - One major, statistics.
 - Six majors, aides-de-camp.
30. Four captains, assistant to chief.
 - Four captains, military statistics.
 - Eight captains, military inspection.
 - Eight captains, assistant adjutant-generals.
 - Six aides, general duty.

The affairs of the ADJUTANT-GENERAL'S DEPARTMENT, while I commanded the Army of the Potomac, were conducted by Brig.-Gen. S. Williams, assisted by Lieut.-Col. James A. Hardie, aide-de-camp. Their management of the department during the organization of the army in the fall and winter of 1861 and during its subsequent operations in the field was excellent.

They were, during the entire period, assisted by Capt. Richard B. Irwin, aide-de-camp, and during the organization of the army by the following-named officers: Capts. Joseph Kirkland, Arthur McClellan, M. T. McMahon, William P. Mason, and William F. Biddle, aides-de-camp.

My **PERSONAL STAFF**, when we embarked for the Peninsula, consisted of Col. Thomas M. Key, additional aide-de-camp; Col. E. H. Wright, additional aide-de-camp and major 6th U. S. Cavalry; Col. T. T. Gantt, additional aide-de-camp; Col. J. J. Astor, Jr., volunteer aide-de-camp; Lieut.-Col. A. V. Colburn, additional aide-de-camp and captain adjutant-general's department; Lieut.-Col. N. B. Sweitzer, additional aide-de-camp and captain 1st U. S. Cavalry; Lieut.-Col. Edward McK. Hudson, additional aide-de-camp and captain 14th U. S. Infantry; Lieut.-Col. Paul Von Radowitz, additional aide-de-camp; Maj. H. Von Hammerstein, additional aide-de-camp; Maj. W. W. Russell, U. S. Marine Corps; Maj. F. Le Compte, of the Swiss army, volunteer aide-de-camp; Capts. Joseph Kirkland, Arthur McClellan, L. P. d'Orleans, R. d'Orleans, M. T. McMahon, William P. Mason, Jr., William F. Biddle, and E. A. Raymond, additional aides-de-camp.

Of these officers, Col. Gantt performed the duty of judge-advocate-general; Maj. Le Compte was a spectator; Capts. Kirkland, McClellan, McMahon, Mason, and Biddle were on duty in the adjutant-general's office; Capt. Raymond with the chief of staff; Capt. McMahon was assigned to the personal staff of Brig.-Gen. Franklin, and Capts. Kirkland and Mason to that of Brig.-Gen. F. J. Porter, during the siege of Yorktown. They remained subsequently with those general officers. Maj. Le Compte left the army during the siege of Yorktown; Cols. Gantt and Astor, Maj. Russell, Capts. L. P. d'Orleans, R. d'Orleans, and Raymond at the close of the Peninsular campaign.

To this number I am tempted to add the Prince de Joinville, who constantly accompanied me through the trying campaign of the Peninsula, and frequently rendered important services.

Soon after we reached the Chickahominy I took as one of my aides Lieut. G. A. Custer, 5th U. S. Cavalry, as a reward for an act of daring gallantry. This was the beginning of the distinguished career of one of the most gallant soldiers of the army and an admirable cavalry leader. Before the termination of the Peninsular campaign Capts. W. S. Abert and Charles R. Lowell, of the 6th U. S. Cavalry, joined my staff as aides-de-camp, and remained with me until I was relieved from the command of the Army of the Potomac. All of these officers served me with great

gallantry and devotion ; they were ever ready to execute any service, no matter how dangerous, difficult, or fatiguing.

The duties of the INSPECTOR-GENERAL'S DEPARTMENT, during the whole period of my command of the Army of the Potomac, were performed by Col. D. B. Sackett, assisted by Maj. N. H. Davis and Roger Jones, of the inspector-general's corps. The value of the services rendered by these officers merits all the commendation that I can bestow. No duty was ever slighted by them and no labor too great for them. Their reports were always full, satisfactory, and thoroughly to be relied upon. Nor did they confine themselves to the mere routine work of their duties, but on the field of battle rendered most valuable services as aides-de-camp under heavy fire.

When I assumed command of the Division of the Potomac I found Maj. J. G. Barnard, U. S. Engineers—subsequently brigadier-general of volunteers—occupying the position of chief-engineer of McDowell's command. I continued him in the same office, and at once gave the necessary instructions for the completion of the defences of the capital and for the entire reorganization of the department.

Under his direction the entire system of defences was carried into execution. This was completed before the army departed for Fort Monroe, and is a sufficient evidence of the skill of the engineers and the diligent labor of the troops.

The ENGINEER DEPARTMENT presented the following organization when the army moved for the Peninsula :

Brig.-Gen. J. G. Barnard, chief-engineer ; First Lieut. H. C. Abbott, topographical engineers, aide-de-camp. Brigade volunteer engineers, Brig.-Gen. Woodbury commanding : 15th N. Y. Volunteers, Col. McLeod Murphy ; 50th N. Y. Volunteers, Col. C. B. Stewart. Battalion, three companies U. S. Engineers, Capt. J. C. Duane commanding ; companies respectively commanded by First Lieuts. C. B. Reese, C. E. Cross, and O. E. Babcock, U. S. Engineers. The chief-engineer was ably assisted in his duties by Lieut.-Col. B. S. Alexander and First Lieuts. C. R. Comstock, M. D. McAlester, and Merrill, U. S. Engineers. Capt. C. S. Stuart and Second Lieut. F. U. Farquhar, U. S. Engineers, joined after the army arrived at Fort Monroe.

The necessary bridge equipage for the operations of a large army had been collected, consisting of bateaux, with the anchors

and flooring material (French model), trestles, and engineers' tools, with the necessary wagons for their transportation.

The small number of officers of this corps available rendered it impracticable to detail engineers permanently at the headquarters of corps and divisions. The companies of regular engineers never had their proper number of officers, and it was necessary, as a rule, to follow the principle of detailing engineer officers temporarily whenever their services were required. Constantly during the construction of the defences of Washington, and during the subsequent campaigns, we suffered great inconvenience and delay from the want of a sufficient number of officers of engineers.

To the corps of TOPOGRAPHICAL ENGINEERS was entrusted the collection of topographical information and the preparation of campaign maps. Until a short time previous to the departure of the army for Fort Monroe, Lieut.-Col. John W. Macomb was in charge of this department and prepared a large amount of valuable material. He was succeeded by Brig.-Gen. A. A. Humphreys, who retained the position throughout the Peninsular campaign. These officers were assisted by Lieuts. O. G. Wagner, N. Bowen, John M. Wilson, and James H. Wilson, topographical engineers. This number, although the greatest available, was so small that much of the duty of the department devolved upon parties furnished by Prof. Bache, Superintendent of the Coast Survey, and other gentlemen from civil life.

Owing to the entire absence of reliable topographical maps, the labors of this corps were difficult and arduous in the extreme. Notwithstanding the energy and ability displayed by Gen. Humphreys, Lieut.-Col. Macomb, and their subordinates, who frequently obtained the necessary information under fire, the movements of the army were sometimes unavoidably delayed by the difficulty of obtaining knowledge of the country in advance. The result of their labors was the preparation of an excellent series of maps, which were invaluable to the armies afterwards traversing the same ground.

During the campaign it was impossible to draw a distinct line of demarcation between the duties of the two corps of engineers, so that the labors of reconnoissances of roads, of lines of entrenchments, of fields for battle, and of the position of the enemy, as well as the construction of siege and defensive works,

were habitually performed by details from either corps, as the convenience of the service demanded.

I desire to express my high appreciation of the skill, gallantry, and devotion displayed by the officers of both corps of engineers under the most trying circumstances.

During the Maryland campaign I united the two corps under Capt. J. C. Duane, U. S. Engineers, and found great advantages from the arrangement. The permanent union of the two corps, since made, was no doubt a wise measure.

Surgeon Charles S. Tripler and Surgeon Jonathan Letterman in turn performed the duties of medical director of the Army of the Potomac, the former from Aug. 12, 1861, until July 1, 1862, and the latter after that date. The difficulties to be overcome in organizing and making effective the MEDICAL DEPARTMENT were very great, arising principally from the inexperience of the regimental medical officers, many of whom were physicians taken suddenly from civil life, who, according to Surgeon Tripler, "had to be instructed in their duties from the very alphabet," and from the ignorance of the line officers as to their relations with the medical officers, which gave rise to confusion and conflict of authority. Boards of examination were instituted, by which many ignorant officers were removed; and by the successive exertions of Surgeons Tripler and Letterman the medical corps was brought to a very high degree of efficiency. With regard to the sanitary condition of the army while on the Potomac, Dr. Tripler said that the records showed a constantly increasing immunity from disease. "In Oct. and Nov., 1861, with an army averaging 130,000 men, we had 7,932 cases of fever of all sorts; of these about 1,000 were reported as cases of typhoid fever. I know that errors of diagnosis were frequently committed, and therefore this must be considered as the limit of typhoid cases. If any army in the world can show such a record as this I do not know when or where it was assembled." From Sept., 1861, to Feb., 1862, while the army was increasing, the number of sick decreased from 7 per cent. to 6.18 per cent. Of these the men sick in the regimental and general hospitals were less than one-half; the remainder were slight cases, under treatment in quarters. "During this time, so far as rumor was concerned, the army was being decimated by disease every month." Of the sani-

tary condition of the army during the Peninsular campaign, up to its arrival at Harrison's Landing, Dr. Tripler says: "During this campaign the army was favored with excellent health. No epidemic disease appeared. Those scourges of modern armies, dysentery, typhus, cholera, were almost unknown. We had some typhoid fever and more malarial fevers, but even these never prevailed to such an extent as to create any alarm. The sick-reports were sometimes larger than we cared to have them; but the great majority of the cases reported were such as did not threaten life or permanent disability. I regret that I have not before me the retained copies of the monthly reports, so that I might give accurate statistics. I have endeavored to recover them, but have been unsuccessful. My recollection is that the whole sick-report never exceeded eight per cent. of the force, and this including all sorts of cases, the trivial as well as the severe. The Army of the Potomac must be conceded to have been the most healthy army in the service of the United States."

The service, labors, and privations of the troops during the Seven Days' Battles had, of course, a great effect on the health of the army after it reached Harrison's Landing, increasing the number of sick to about twenty per cent. of the whole force.

The nature of the military operations had also unavoidably placed the medical department in a very unsatisfactory condition. Supplies had been almost entirely exhausted or necessarily abandoned; hospital tents abandoned or destroyed; and the medical officers were deficient in numbers and broken down by fatigue.

All the remarkable energy and ability of Surgeon Letterman were required to restore the efficiency of his department; but before we left Harrison's Landing he had succeeded in fitting it out thoroughly with the supplies it required, and the health of the army was vastly improved by the sanitary measures which were enforced at his suggestion.

The great haste with which the army was removed from the Peninsula made it necessary to leave at Fort Monroe, to be forwarded afterwards, nearly all the baggage and transportation, including medical stores and ambulances, all the vessels being required to transport the troops themselves and their ammunition. When the Army of the Potomac returned to Washington

after Gen. Pope's campaign, and the medical department came once more under Surgeon Letterman's control, he found it in a deplorable condition. The officers were worn out by the labors they had performed, and the few supplies that had been brought from the Peninsula had been exhausted or abandoned, so that the work of reorganization and resupplying had to be again performed, and this while the army was moving rapidly and almost in the face of the enemy. That it was successfully accomplished is shown by the care and attention which the wounded received after the battles of South Mountain and Antietam.

Among the improvements introduced into his department by Surgeon Letterman, the principal are the organization of an ambulance corps, the system of field-hospitals, and the method of supplying by brigades, all of which were instituted during the Maryland campaign, and found so efficient that they remained unchanged until the close of the war, and were to a great extent adopted by the other armies of the United States.

On assuming command of the troops in and around Washington I appointed Capt. S. Van Vliet, assistant quartermaster (afterwards brigadier-general), CHIEF QUARTERMASTER to my command, and gave him the necessary instructions for organizing his department and collecting the supplies requisite for the large army then called for.

The disaster at Manassas had but recently occurred, and the army was quite destitute of quartermaster's stores. Gen. Van Vliet, with great energy and zeal, set himself about the task of furnishing the supplies immediately necessary, and preparing to obtain the still larger amounts which would be required by the new troops which were moving in large numbers towards the capital. The principal depot for supplies in the city of Washington was under charge of Col. D. H. Rucker, assistant quartermaster, who ably performed his duties. Lieut.-Col. R. Ingalls, assistant quartermaster, was placed in charge of the department on the south side of the Potomac. I directed a large depot for transportation to be established at Perryville, on the left bank of the Susquehanna, a point equally accessible by rail and water. Capt. C. G. Sawtelle, assistant quartermaster, was detailed to organize the camp, and performed his duties to my entire satisfaction. Capt. J. J. Dana, assistant quartermaster, had immediate charge of the transportation in and about Washington, as

well as of the large number of horses purchased for the use of the artillery and cavalry. The principal difficulties which Gen. Van Vliet had to encounter arose from the inexperience of the majority of the officers of his department in the new regiments and brigades.

The necessity of attending personally to minor details rendered his duties arduous and harassing in the extreme. All obstacles, however, were surmounted by the untiring industry of the chief quartermaster and his immediate subordinates, and when the army was prepared to move the organization of the department was found to be admirable.

When it was determined to move the army to the Peninsula the duties of providing water transportation were devolved by the Secretary of War upon his assistant, the Hon. John Tucker. The vessels were ordered to Alexandria, and Lieut.-Col. Ingalls was placed in immediate charge of the embarkation of the troops, transportation, and material of every description. Operations of this nature, on so extensive a scale, had no parallel in the history of our country.

The arrangements of Lieut.-Col. Ingalls were perfected with remarkable skill and energy, and the army and its material were embarked and transported to Fortress Monroe in a very short space of time and entirely without loss.

During the operations on the Peninsula, until the arrival of troops at Harrison's Landing, Gen. Van Vliet retained the position of chief quartermaster, and maintained the thorough organization and efficiency of his department. The principal depots of supplies were under the immediate charge of Lieut.-Cols. Ingalls and Sawtelle.

On the 10th of July, 1862, Gen. Van Vliet having requested to be relieved from duty with the Army of the Potomac, I appointed Lieut.-Col. Ingalls chief quartermaster, and he continued to discharge the duties of that office during the remainder of the Peninsular and the Maryland campaigns in a manner which fully sustained the high reputation he had previously acquired.

The immense amount of labor accomplished, often under the most difficult circumstances, the admirable system under which the duties of the department were performed, and the entire success which attended the efforts to supply so large an army, reflect

the highest credit upon the officers upon whom these onerous duties devolved.

On the 1st of Aug., 1861, Col. H. F. Clarke, commissary of subsistence, joined my staff, and at once entered upon his duties as CHIEF COMMISSARY of the Army of the Potomac. In order to realize the responsibilities pertaining to this office, as well as to form a proper estimate of the vast amount of labor which must necessarily devolve upon its occupant, it is only necessary to consider the unprepared state of the country to engage in a war of such magnitude, and the lack of practical knowledge on the part of the officers with reference to supplying and subsisting a large, and at that time unorganized, army. Yet, notwithstanding the existence of these great obstacles, the manner in which the duties of the commissary department were discharged was such as to merit and call forth the commendation of the entire army.

During the stay of the Army of the Potomac in the vicinity of Washington, prior to the Peninsular campaign, its subsistence was drawn chiefly from the depots which had been established by the commissary department at Washington, Alexandria, Forts Corcoran and Runyon. In the important task of designating and establishing depots of supplies Col. Clarke was ably seconded by his assistants, Col. Amos Beckwith, C. S., U. S. A.; Lieut.-Col. George Bell, C. S., U. S. A.; Lieut.-Col. A. P. Porter, C. S., U. S. A.; Capt. Thomas Wilson, C. S., U. S. A.; Capt. Brownell Granger, C. S., U. S. Volunteers; Capt. W. H. Bell, C. S., U. S. A.; Capt. J. H. Woodward, C. S., U. S. Volunteers; and Capt. W. R. Murphy, C. S., U. S. Volunteers.

A full knowledge of the highly creditable manner in which each and all of the above-mentioned officers discharged their duties was given in the detailed report of Col. Clarke. The remarks and suggestions contained in his report afford valuable rules for the future guidance of the subsistence department in supplying armies in the field. The success of the subsistence department of the Army of the Potomac was in a great measure attributable to the fact that the subsistence department at Washington made ample provision for sending supplies to the Peninsula, and that it always exercised the most intelligent foresight. It moreover gave its advice and countenance to the officers charged with its duties and reputation in the field, and those officers, I am happy to say, worked with it and together in per-

fect harmony for the public good. During the entire period that I was in command of the Army of the Potomac there was no instance within my knowledge where the troops were without their rations from any fault of the officers of this department.

I am quite within bounds when I say that no one could have performed his vitally important duties more satisfactorily than did Gen. Clarke. He never caused me the slightest anxiety, and I soon learned that he would always carry out my wishes, were it in the power of man to do so. A stranger to all petty intrigue, a brave and able officer, a modest man intent only upon the proper performance of his duty, he has never received the reward and appreciation his invaluable services merited. He held the post of chief-commissary of the Army of the Potomac until the close of the war, discharging his duty to the entire satisfaction of its successive commanders. Yet he was overslaughed in favor of an inferior who had never held a post of great importance, and whose only claim was the personal friendship of the President who committed the injustice. As I write (Sept., 1882) he has just received the grade of colonel in the ordinary course of promotion, and will ere long be retired with that grade, his only reward having been the empty brevet of major-general.

The ORDNANCE DEPARTMENT, that very important branch of the service, was placed under the charge of Capt. C. P. Kingsbury, ordnance corps, colonel and aide-de-camp. Great difficulty existed in the proper organization of the department for the want of a sufficient number of suitable officers to perform the duties at the various headquarters and depots of supply. But far greater obstacles had to be surmounted, from the fact that the supply of small arms was totally inadequate to the demands of a large army, and a vast proportion of those furnished were of such inferior quality as to be unsatisfactory to the troops and condemned by their officers. The supply of artillery was more abundant, but of great variety. Rifled ordnance was just coming into use for the first time in this country, and the description of gun and kind of projectile which would prove most effective, and should, therefore, be adopted, was a mere matter of theory. To obviate these difficulties large quantities of small arms of foreign manufacture were contracted for; private enterprise in the construction of arms and ammunition was encouraged; and by

the time the army was ordered to move to the Peninsula the amount of ordnance and ordnance stores was ample.

But it was not until the close of 1861, too late for active operations, that the infantry were reasonably well provided with serviceable arms; and even after that the calibres were too numerous, and many arms really unfit for service. The artillery material, likewise, arrived in insufficient quantities until the early part of 1862. I mention these facts, not as in any way reflecting upon the ordnance department, which accomplished all that was in the power of men to do, but as showing the actual difficulties of the situation. Much also had been done to bring the quality, both of arms and ammunition, up to the proper standard. Boards of officers were in session continually during the autumn and winter of 1861 to test the relative merits of new arms and projectiles.

The reports of these boards, confirmed by subsequent experience in the field, have done much to establish the respective claims of different inventors and manufacturers. During the campaigns of the Peninsula and Maryland the officers connected with the department were zealous and energetic, and kept the troops well supplied, notwithstanding the perplexing and arduous nature of their duties. One great source of perplexity was the fact that it had been necessary to issue arms of all varieties and calibres, giving an equal diversity in the kinds of ammunition required. Untiring watchfulness was therefore incumbent upon the officers in charge to prevent confusion and improper distribution of cartridges. Col. Kingsbury discharged the duties of his office with great efficiency until July, 1862, when his health required that he should be relieved. First Lieut. Thomas G. Baylor, ordnance corps, succeeded him, and performed his duty during the remainder of the Peninsular and Maryland campaigns with marked ability and success.

Immediately after I was placed in command of the Division of the Potomac I appointed Col. Andrew Porter, 16th Regiment Infantry, PROVOST-MARSHAL of Washington. All the available regular infantry, a battery, and a squadron of cavalry were placed under his command, and by his energetic action he soon corrected the serious evils which existed, and restored order in the city.

When the army was about to take the field Gen. Porter was appointed provost-marshal-general of the Army of the Potomac,

and held that most important position until the end of the Peninsular campaign, when sickness, contracted in the untiring discharge of his duties, compelled him to ask to be relieved from the position he had so ably and energetically filled.

The provost-marshal-general's department had the charge of a class of duties which had not before, in our service, been defined and grouped under the management of a special department. The following subjects indicate the sphere of this department :

Suppression of marauding and depredations, and of all brawls and disturbances, preservation of good order, and suppression of disturbances beyond the limits of the camps.

Prevention of straggling on the march.

Suppression of gambling-houses, drinking-houses or bar-rooms, and brothels.

Regulation of hotels, taverns, markets, and places of public amusement.

Searches, seizures, and arrests. Execution of sentences of general courts-martial involving imprisonment or capital punishment. Enforcement of orders prohibiting the sale of intoxicating liquors, whether by tradesmen or sutlers, and of orders respecting passes.

Deserters from the enemy.

Prisoners of war taken from the enemy.

Countersigning safeguards.

Passes to citizens within the lines and for purposes of trade.

Complaints of citizens as to the conduct of the soldiers.

Gen. Porter was assisted by the following named officers :

Maj. W. H. Wood, 17th U. S. Infantry ; Capt. James McMillan, acting assistant adjutant-general, 2d U. S. Infantry ; Capt. W. T. Gentry, 17th U. S. Infantry ; Capt. J. W. Forsyth, 18th U. S. Infantry ; Lieut. J. W. Jones, 12th U. S. Infantry ; Lieut. C. F. Trowbridge, 16th U. S. Infantry ; and Lieut. C. D. Mehaffey, 1st U. S. Infantry.

The provost-guard was composed of the 2d U. S. Cavalry, Maj. Pleasonton, and a battalion of the 8th and 17th U. S. Infantry, Maj. Willard. After Gen. Porter was relieved Maj. Wood was in charge of this department until after the battle of Antietam, when Brig.-Gen. Patrick was appointed provost-marshal-general.

When the army took the field, for the purpose of securing

order and regularity in the camp of headquarters, and facilitating its movements, the office of COMMANDANT OF GENERAL HEAD-QUARTERS was created, and assigned to Maj. G. O. Haller, 7th U. S. Infantry. Six companies of infantry were placed under his orders for guard and police duty.

From Aug., 1861, the position of JUDGE-ADVOCATE was held by Col. Thomas T. Gantt, aide-de-camp, until compelled by ill-health to retire, at Harrison's Landing, in Aug., 1862. His reviews of the decisions of courts-martial during this period were of great utility in correcting the practice in military courts, diffusing true notions of discipline and subordination, and setting before the army a high standard of soldierly honor. Upon the retirement of Col. Gantt the duties of judge-advocate were ably performed by Col. Thomas M. Key, aide-de-camp.

The method of conveying intelligence and orders invented and introduced into the service by Maj. Albert J. Myer, signal officer U. S. Army, was first practically tested in large operations during the organization of the Army of the Potomac. Under the direction of Maj. Myer a SIGNAL CORPS was formed by detailing officers and men from the different regiments of volunteers, and instructing them in the use of the flags by day and torches by night.

The chief signal officer was indefatigable in his exertions to render his corps effective, and it soon became available for service in every division of the army. In addition to the flags and torches Maj. Myer introduced a portable insulated telegraph-wire, which could be readily laid from point to point, and which could be used under the same general system. In front of Washington and on the lower Potomac, at any point within our lines not reached by the military telegraph, the great usefulness of this system of signals was made manifest. But it was not until after the arrival of the army upon the Peninsula, and during the siege and battles of that and the Maryland campaigns, that the great benefits to be derived from it on the field and under fire were fully appreciated.

There was scarcely any action or skirmish in which the signal corps did not render important services. Often under heavy fire of artillery, and not unfrequently while exposed to musketry, the officers and men of this corps gave information of the movements of the enemy, and transmitted directions for the evolu-

tions of our own troops. The weak point in the signal corps as then constituted was that its officers were not trained soldiers, and therefore their judgment could not always be relied upon.

The TELEGRAPHIC OPERATIONS of the Army of the Potomac were superintended by Maj. Thomas J. Eckert, and under the immediate direction of Mr. Caldwell, who was, with a corps of operators, attached to my headquarters during the entire campaigns upon the Peninsula and in Maryland.

The services of this corps were arduous and efficient. Under the admirable arrangements of Maj. Eckert they were constantly provided with all the material for constructing new lines, which were rapidly established whenever the army changed position, and it was not unfrequently the case that the operatives worked under fire from the enemy's guns; yet they invariably performed all the duties required of them with great alacrity and cheerfulness, and it was seldom that I was without the means of direct telegraphic communication with the War Department and with the corps commanders.

From the organization of the Army of the Potomac up to Nov. 1, 1862, including the Peninsular and Maryland campaigns, upwards of twelve hundred (1,200) miles of military telegraph line had been constructed in connection with the operations of the army, and the number of operatives and builders employed was about two hundred (200).

To Prof. Lowe, the intelligent and enterprising aeronaut, who had the management of the BALLOONS, I was indebted for information obtained during his ascensions. In a clear atmosphere, and in a country not too much obstructed by woods, balloon reconnoissances made by intelligent officers are often of considerable value.

I more than once took occasion to recommend the members of my staff, both general and personal, for promotion and reward. I once more record their names in the history of the Army of the Potomac as gallant soldiers, to whom their country owes a debt of gratitude, still unpaid, for the courage, ability, and untiring zeal they displayed during the eventful campaigns in which they bore so prominent a part.

CHAPTER VIII.

Various generals—Scott, Halleck, Hunter, Sumner, Franklin, Porter, Sedgwick, and others—Blenker's brigade—Scenes in his command—The Hungarian Klapka—The French prisoners—Events in Maryland.

It is a great mistake to suppose that I had the cordial support of Gen. Scott; the contrary was too much the case. While in the West I failed to obtain from him the assistance needed, and when I reached Washington I soon found that he was unnecessarily jealous of me. On the very day of my arrival he interfered, as already described, to prevent my keeping an appointment with the President, because he was not invited to be present. He directed me to ride around the streets of Washington and see that the drunken men were picked up, which I naturally did not do! He opposed the bill for increasing the number of aides, on the ground that he had only two in Mexico. Soon after assuming the command I saw the absolute necessity of giving a name to the mass of troops under my command, in order to inspire them with *esprit de corps*; I therefore proposed to call my command "The Army of the Potomac." Gen. Scott objected most strenuously to this step, saying that the routine of service could be carried on only under the "department" system, etc. I persisted, and finally had my own way in the matter in spite of the opposition. I also told him that I proposed to organize brigades at first; then, when that organization was fairly established, to form divisions; and finally, after everything was well arranged and I could be sure of selecting the right commanders—probably after having been in the field for a time—to form army corps.

The general objected to this also, insisting that no higher organization than that of brigade was necessary; that it was impossible to organize the troops under my command as an army! Consequently, when the proper time arrived, I organized the divisions without further discussion of the matter.

Gen. Scott was no longer himself when the war broke out. The weight of years and great bodily suffering pressed heavily upon him, and really rendered him incapable of performing the

duties of his station. For some time before he retired he was simply an obstacle, and a very serious one, in the way of active work. He did not wish me to succeed him as general-in-chief, but desired that place for Halleck, and long withheld his retirement that Halleck might arrive East and fall heir to his place.

Speaking of Halleck, a day or two before he arrived in Washington Stanton came to caution me against trusting Halleck, who was, he said, probably the greatest scoundrel and most barefaced villain in America; he said that he was totally destitute of principle, and that in the Almaden Quicksilver case he had convicted Halleck of perjury in open court. When Halleck arrived he came to caution me against Stanton, repeating almost precisely the same words that Stanton had employed.

I made a note of this fact soon after its occurrence, and lately, Dec. 4, 1883, I saw for the first time, on page 833, vol. viii., series 1, "Official Records of the War of the Rebellion," Gen. E. A. Hitchcock's letter to Halleck, in which the former transmits a message from Stanton on the very same subject. This is eminently characteristic of Stanton, who would say one thing to a man's face and just the reverse behind his back.*

Of all men whom I have encountered in high position Halleck was the most hopelessly stupid. It was more difficult to get an idea through his head than can be conceived by any one who never made the attempt. I do not think he ever had a correct military idea from beginning to end.

I left Gen. Hunter in nominal command of his brigade, because he bore an excellent reputation in the old army and had been wounded; I have never met him personally. He did not assume command of the brigade, for as soon as he recovered from his wound the President appointed him major-general of volunteers, that he might go to Illinois and, in the words of Mr. Lincoln, "be a sort of father to them out there."

* The following is an extract from the letter of Gen. E. A. Hitchcock to Gen. H. W. Halleck, dated Washington, March 22, 1862:

"I then bid the secretary (Stanton) good-evening and left him, but he called me back, and added that if I was going to write to you he wished to convey his respects, and his future confidence in your ability and patriotism, explaining that he had been employed against you in the mine case in California, and that his partner had some difficulty or controversy with you of a somewhat personal nature, but that, for his part, he had taken no interest in it, and had never had any other than the highest respect for you, and he hoped you would not imagine that he ever had."

Heintzelman also received a brigade; he, too, had been wounded at Bull Run, and bore a good reputation in the old army. He was a very brave man and an excellent officer.

W. T. Sherman was almost immediately taken from me to accompany Robert Anderson to Kentucky. I had a high opinion of him and parted from him with regret.

Philip Kearny received a brigade; but, though he stood high as a remarkably daring man and good cavalry captain in the Mexican war, I had not sufficient confidence in his brains to give him one of the first divisions. I have since sometimes thought that I would have done well had I given him command of the cavalry.

Sumner was in California when I assumed command; he returned not long before we took the field, and at once received a division. He was an old and tried officer; perfectly honest; as brave as a man could be; conscientious and laborious. In many respects he was a model soldier. He was a man for whom I had a very high regard, and for his memory I have the greatest respect. He was a very valuable man, and his soldierly example was of the highest value in a new army. A nation is fortunate that possesses many such soldiers as was Edwin V. Sumner.

Franklin was one of the best officers I had; very powerful. He was a man not only of excellent judgment, but of a remarkably high order of intellectual ability. He was often badly treated, and seldom received the credit he deserved. His moral character was of the highest, and he was in all respects an admirable corps commander; more than that, he would have commanded an army well. The only reason why I did not send him to relieve Sherman, instead of Buell, was that I could not spare such a man from the Army of the Potomac.

Blenker I found, and retained, in command of the Germans. Born in Bavaria, it was said he had served in Greece as a non-commissioned officer, and subsequently as a colonel or general officer in the revolutionary army of Baden in 1848. He was in many respects an excellent soldier; had his command in excellent drill, was very fond of display, but did not, or could not, always restrain his men from plundering. Had he remained with me I think that he and his division would have done good service, and that they would have been kept under good dis-

cipline. It would be difficult to find a more soldierly-looking set of men than he had under his command. Of his subordinate officers the best was Gen. Stahl, a Hungarian, who had served with distinction under Georgei. His real name, I believe, was Count Serbiani.

Richardson was in command of a regiment of Michigan volunteers when I went to Washington; I at once gave him a brigade. He was an officer of the old army, "bull-headed," brave, a good disciplinarian. He received his mortal wound at Antietam.

To Stone I gave a detached brigade on the upper Potomac—ground with which he was familiar. He was a most charming and amiable gentleman; honest, brave, a good soldier, though occasionally carried away by his chivalrous ideas. He was very unfortunate, and was as far as possible from meriting the sad fate and cruel treatment he met with.

I found Couch in command of a regiment, and soon gave him a brigade. He was an honest, faithful, and laborious man, a brave, modest, and valuable officer.

Fitz-John Porter was on duty with Gen. Patterson, as adjutant-general, when I assumed command. As soon as possible I had him made a brigadier-general and gave him the command vacated by W. T. Sherman. Take him for all in all, he was probably the best general officer I had under me. He had excellent ability, sound judgment, and all the instincts of a soldier. He was perfectly familiar with all the details of his duty, an excellent organizer and administrative officer, and one of the most conscientious and laborious men I ever knew. I never found it necessary to do more than give him general instructions, for it was certain that all details would be cared for and nothing neglected. I always knew that an order given to him would be fully carried out, were it morally and physically possible. He was one of the coolest and most imperturbable men in danger whom I ever knew—like all his race. I shall have occasion to revert to him hereafter, and will now only add that he was treated with the grossest injustice—chiefly, I fear, because of his devotion to me.

Buell was in California, a lieutenant-colonel of the adjutant-general's department. I had him appointed a brigadier-general and sent for him at once. He possessed a very high

reputation in the Mexican war, and I found him to be an admirable soldier in every regard.

To Sedgwick I gave a brigade. Not knowing him well, I did not at first appreciate his high qualities, but soon discovered them and gave him the first vacant division—that originally commanded by Stone. He was one of the best and most modest soldiers we had. Possessing excellent ability and judgment, the highest bravery, great skill in handling troops, wonderful powers in instructing and disciplining men, as well as in gaining their love, respect, and confidence, he was withal so modest and unobtrusive that it was necessary to be thrown closely in contact with him to appreciate him. He was thoroughly unselfish, honest, and true as steel. His conduct during the battle of Chancellorsville in storming the works on Marie's Heights, and afterwards holding his own against tremendous odds, was a remarkable and most brilliant feat of arms.

Hancock received a brigade early in the formation of the Army of the Potomac. He was a man of the most chivalrous courage, and of a superb presence, especially in action; he had a wonderfully quick and correct eye for ground and for handling troops; his judgment was good, and it would be difficult to find a better corps commander.

John Reynolds was commandant of the corps of cadets when the war broke out. He gained a high reputation in the Mexican war as an officer of light artillery, and was among the first whom I caused to be appointed brigadier-general. He was a splendid soldier and performed admirably every duty assigned to him. Constantly improving, he was, when killed at Gettysburg, with Meade and Sedgwick, the best officer then with the Army of the Potomac. He was remarkably brave and intelligent, an honest, true gentleman.

Meade was also one of my early appointments as brigadier-general. He was an excellent officer; cool, brave, and intelligent; he always did his duty admirably, and was an honest man. As commander of an army he was far superior to either Hooker or Burnside.

Col. Ingalls was, in my experience, unequalled as a chief-quartermaster in the field.

When first assigned to the command in the Department of the Ohio, I applied for Fitz-John Porter as my adjutant-gene-

ral, but he was already on duty with Gen. Patterson in the same capacity, and could not be spared. Soon afterwards I obtained Maj. Seth Williams, who had been on duty with Gen. Harney at St. Louis, and he remained with me as my adjutant-general until I was finally relieved from the command of the Army of the Potomac. I never met with a better bureau officer, perhaps never with so good a one. He thoroughly understood the working of the adjutant-general's department, was indefatigable in the performance of his duty, made many and valuable suggestions as to the system of returns, reports, etc., and thus exerted a great influence in bringing about the excellent organization of the Army of the Potomac. He was thoroughly honest and a gentleman; he was, if anything, too modest, for he would probably have accomplished more had he possessed more self-reliance. He won universal regard by his kind and considerate manner towards those with whom he was officially brought in contact. I never knew a more laborious and conscientious man.

During the autumn of 1861, as already stated, I spent my days chiefly in the saddle, rarely returning from my rides until late at night. Most of the night and the morning hours were given up to office-work.

Of course I rode everywhere and saw everything. Not an entrenchment was commenced unless I had at least approved its site; many I located myself. Not a camp that I did not examine, not a picket-line that I did not visit and cross, so that almost every man in the army saw me at one time or another, and most of them became familiar with my face. And there was no part of the ground near Washington that I did not know thoroughly.

The most entertaining of my duties were those which sometimes led me to Blenker's camp, whither Franklin was always glad to accompany me to see the "circus," or "opera," as he usually called the performance. As soon as we were sighted Blenker would have the "officer's call" blown to assemble his polyglot collection, with their uniform as varied and brilliant as the colors of the rainbow. Wrapped in his scarlet-lined cloak, his group of officers ranged around him, he would receive us with the most formal and polished courtesy. Being a very handsome and soldierly-looking man himself, and there

being many equally so among his surroundings, the tableau was always very effective, and presented a striking contrast to the matter-of-fact way in which things were managed in the other divisions.

In a few minutes he would shout, "*Ordinanz numero eins!*" whereupon champagne would be brought in great profusion, the bands would play, sometimes songs be sung. It was said, I know not how truly, that Blenker had been a non-commissioned officer in the German contingent serving under King Otho of Greece.

His division was very peculiar. So far as "the pride, pomp, and circumstance of glorious war" were concerned, it certainly outshone all the others. Their drill and bearing were also excellent; for all the officers, and probably all the men, had served in Europe. I have always regretted that the division was finally taken from me and sent to Fremont. The officers and men were all strongly attached to me; I could control them as no one else could, and they would have done good service had they remained in Sumner's corps. The regiments were all foreign and mostly of Germans; but the most remarkable of all was the Garibaldi regiment. Its colonel, D'Utassy, was a Hungarian, and was said to have been a rider in Franconi's Circus, and terminated his public American career in the Albany Penitentiary. His men were from all known and unknown lands, from all possible and impossible armies: Zouaves from Algiers, men of the "Foreign Legion," Zephyrs, Cossacks, Garibaldians of the deepest dye, English deserters, Sepoys, Turcos, Croats, Swiss, beer-drinkers from Bavaria, stout men from North Germany, and no doubt Chinese, Esquimaux, and detachments from the army of the Grand Duchess of Gerolstein.

Such a mixture was probably never before seen under any flag, unless, perhaps, in such bands as Holk's Jagers of the Thirty Years' War or the free lances of the middle ages.

I well remember that in returning one night from beyond the picket-lines I encountered an outpost of the Garibaldians. In reply to their challenge I tried English, French, Spanish, Italian, German, Indian, a little Russian and Turkish; * all in

* It is proper to say that this is doubtless a simple statement of fact.

vain, for nothing at my disposal made the slightest impression upon them, and I inferred that they were perhaps gipsies or Esquimaux or Chinese.

Mr. Seward's policy of making ours "a people's war," as he expressed it, by drumming up officers from all parts of the world, sometimes produced strange results and brought us rare specimens of the class vulgarly known as "hard cases." Most of the officers thus obtained had left their own armies for the armies' good, although there were admirable and honorable exceptions, such as Stahl, Willich, Rosencranz, Cesnola, and some others. Few were of the slightest use to us, and I think the reason why the German regiments so seldom turned out well was that their officers were so often men without character.

Soon after Gen. Scott retired I received a letter from the Hungarian Klapka informing me that he had been approached by some of Mr. Seward's agents to get him into our army, and saying that he thought it best to come to a direct understanding with myself as to terms, etc. He said that he would require a bonus of \$100,000 in cash and a salary of \$25,000 per annum; that on his first arrival he would consent to serve as my chief of staff for a short time until he acquired the language, and that he would then take my place of general commanding-in-chief. He failed to state what provision he would make for me, that probably to depend upon the impression I made upon him.

I immediately took the letter to Mr. Lincoln, who was made very angry by it, and, taking possession of the letter, said that he would see that I should not be troubled in that way again.

Cluseret—afterwards Minister of War under the Commune—brought me a letter of introduction from Garibaldi, recommending him in the highest terms as a soldier, man of honor, etc. I did not like his appearance and declined his services; but without my knowledge or consent Stanton appointed him a colonel on my staff. I still declined to have anything to do with him, and he was sent to the Mountain Department, as chief of staff, I think.

On the recommendation of the Prussian minister I took upon Gen. McClellan was able to converse freely in most of the languages named, including two dialects of North American Indian, and had sufficient practical knowledge of all of them (as well as others) to make him independent of an interpreter.

W. C. P

my staff, as aides-de-camp, two German officers whose subsequent histories were peculiar and suggestive. One was a member of a very noble family, whose father had held high official rank in his native land, the son having been a lieutenant in the Guard Cavalry. He was one of the handsomest young fellows I have ever seen, polished to the last degree, and a splendid soldier. He remained with me during my command, and always performed difficult and dangerous duties in the best possible manner. He remained with the army on staff-duty after I was relieved.

Being in Germany when the Austro-Prussian war broke out, I determined to call upon the War Minister and advise him to recall the officer in question, as an admirable soldier whose experience in our war would be valuable; for I had been led to believe that his original separation from his own army had been caused by some trivial breach of discipline. Within a few days I learned that he had been dismissed our service. The last I heard of this poor fellow—for one cannot help feeling sorry for the waste of such excellent gifts—was that he made his living as croupier in a gambling-den.

The other was of an old military family; his father had been a general, and I had met his brothers and cousins as officers in the Austrian army. He also was an admirable and most useful aide in difficult times. After I left the field he became lieutenant-colonel, and probably colonel, of a regiment, and did good service. At the close of the war, failing to be retained, he enlisted in a regular cavalry regiment, hoping to be examined and promoted to a commission; but his habits were against him. At last, in carrying the mail during the winter between the posts on the plains, his feet were frozen and, I think, amputated. Finally his family sent for him, and he returned home to die.

Of a different order were the French princes who formed part of my military family from Sept. 20, 1861, to the close of the Seven Days. They served as captains, declining any higher rank, though they had fully earned promotion before the close of their connection with the army. They served precisely as the other aides, taking their full share of all duty, whether agreeable or disagreeable, dangerous or the reverse. They were fine young fellows and good soldiers, and deserved high credit in every way.

Their uncle, the Prince de Joinville, who accompanied them

as a Mentor, held no official position, but our relations were always confidential and most agreeable. The Duc de Chartres had received a military education at the military school at Turin ; the Comte de Paris had only received instruction in military matters from his tutors. They had their separate establishment, being accompanied by a physician and a captain of *chasseurs-à-pied*. The latter was an immense man, who could never, under any circumstances, be persuaded to mount a horse : he always made the march on foot.

Their little establishment was usually the jolliest in camp, and it was often a great relief to me, when burdened with care, to listen to the laughter and gayety that resounded from their tents. They managed their affairs so well that they were respected and liked by all with whom they came in contact. The Prince de Joinville sketched admirably and possessed a most keen sense of the ridiculous, so that his sketch-book was an inexhaustible source of amusement, because everything ludicrous that struck his fancy on the march was sure to find a place there. He was a man of far more than ordinary ability and of excellent judgment. His deafness was, of course, a disadvantage to him, but his admirable qualities were so marked that I became warmly attached to him, as, in fact, I did to all the three, and I have good reason to know that the feeling was mutual.

Whatever may have been the peculiarities of Louis Philippe during his later life, it is very certain that in his youth, as the Duc de Chartres, he was a brave, dashing, and excellent soldier. His sons, especially the Ducs d'Orléans, d'Aumale, Montpensier, and the Prince de Joinville, showed the same characteristics in Algiers and elsewhere ; and I may be permitted to say that my personal experience with the three members of the family who served with me was such that there could be no doubt as to their courage, energy, and military spirit. The course pursued by the Prince de Joinville and the Duc de Chartres during the fatal invasion of France by the Germans was in perfect harmony with this. Both sought service, under assumed names, in the darkest and most dangerous hours of their country's trial. The duke served for some months as Capt. Robert le Fort, and under that name, his identity being known to few if any beyond his closest personal friends, gained promotion and distinction by his gallantry and intelligence.

Should the Comte de Paris ever reach the throne of France—as is more than probable—I am sure that he will prove to be a wise, honest, and firm constitutional king, and that the honor and prosperity of France will be safer in his hands and those of his soldierly family than for many years past.

Information from various sources received in Aug. and Sept., 1861, convinced the government that there was serious danger of the secession of Maryland.

The secessionists possessed about two-thirds of each branch of the State legislature, and the general government had what it regarded as good reasons for believing that a secret, extra, and illegal session of the legislature was about to be convened at Frederick on the 17th of Sept. in order to pass an ordinance of secession. It was understood that this action was to be supported by an advance of the Southern army across the Potomac—an advance which the Army of the Potomac was not yet in a condition to desire. Even an abortive attempt to carry out this design would have involved great civil confusion and military inconvenience. It was impossible to permit the secession of Maryland, intervening, as it did, between the capital and the loyal States, and commanding all our lines of supply and reinforcement. I do not know how the government obtained the information on which they reached their conclusions. I do not know how reliable it was. I only know that at the time it seemed more than probable, and that ordinary prudence required that it should be regarded as certain. So that when I received the orders for the arrest of the most active members of the legislature, for the purpose of preventing the intended meeting and the passage of the act of secession, I gave that order a most full and hearty support as a measure of undoubted military necessity.

On the 10th of Sept. Hon. Simon Cameron, Secretary of War, instructed Gen. Banks to prevent the passage of any act of secession by the Maryland legislature, directing him to arrest all or any number of the members, if necessary, but in any event to do the work effectively.

On the same day the Secretary of War instructed Gen. Dix to arrest six conspicuous and active secessionists of Baltimore, three of whom were members of the legislature. They were to be sent to Fort Monroe, their papers seized and examined. A special agent was sent to take immediate charge of the arrests.

On the 10th of Sept. Gen. Dix sent to Secretary Seward and myself marked lists of the legislature. In his letters he strongly approved of the intended arrests, and advised that those arrested should be sent to New York harbor by a special steamer.

The total number of arrests made was about sixteen, and the result was the thorough upsetting of whatever plans the secessionists of Maryland may have entertained. It is needless to say that the arrested parties were ultimately released, and were kindly treated while imprisoned. Their arrest was a military necessity, and they had no cause of complaint. In fact, they might with justice have received much more severe treatment than they did.

On the 28th of Oct. I received from the chief of the Secret Service a report in reference to the elections to be held in Maryland, on the 6th of Nov., for governor, members of the State legislature, etc. In this report he states that he had information of a general apprehension among the Union citizens of the southern part of the State of a serious interference with their rights of suffrage by the disunion citizens of that district on the occasion of the election; that it was said that several hundred persons, who had left that part of Maryland with the avowed purpose of aiding the secessionist cause by taking up arms or otherwise, had recently returned to their homes, as was supposed, for the purpose of controlling the State election; also, that it had been reported to him that a large quantity of arms were concealed in a designated locality for use in endeavoring to control the election by the disunionists.

I laid this report immediately before the President, who caused the following endorsement (also issued separately in the form of an order) to be made upon it:

"DEPARTMENT OF STATE,
"WASHINGTON, Oct. 28, 1861.

"*Maj.-Gen. George B. McClellan, etc., etc., etc.* :

"The President desires that Gen. McClellan will direct such disposition of the military force as will guard effectually against invasion of the peace and order of Maryland during the election, and for this purpose he is authorized to suspend the *habeas corpus* and make arrests of traitors and their confederates in his discretion.

"(Signed)

WILLIAM H. SEWARD."

To carry out these instructions the necessary orders were

issued to Gens. Banks, Stone, and Hooker. I give a copy of the order issued to Gen. Banks; the others were the same, *mutatis mutandis* :

HEADQUARTERS, ARMY OF THE POTOMAC,
Oct. 29, 1861.

To Maj.-Gen. N. P. Banks, Commanding Division at Muddy Branch, Md. :

GENERAL : There is an apprehension among Union citizens in many parts of Maryland of an attempt at interference with the rights of suffrage by disunion citizens on the occasion of the election to take place on the 6th of Nov. next. In order to prevent this the major-general commanding directs that you send detachments of a sufficient number of men to the different points in your vicinity where the elections are to be held, to protect the Union voters and see that no disunionists are allowed to intimidate them or in any way interfere with their rights. He also desires you to arrest and hold in confinement till after the election all disunionists who are known to have returned from Virginia recently and who show themselves at the polls, and to guard effectually against any invasion of the peace and order of the election.

For the purpose of carrying out these instructions you are authorized to suspend the *habeas corpus*. Gen. Stone has received similar instructions to these. You will please confer with him as to the particular points that each shall take control of.

I am, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

R. B. MARCY, *Chief of Staff.*

CHAPTER IX

Conspiracy of the politicians—Edwin M. Stanton—Interview at the President's office—Salmon P. Chase—Relations with Mr. Lincoln—Anecdotes—President's military orders—Reduction of army.

I HAVE already stated in a general way what occurred between myself and some of the radical leaders shortly after I reached Washington. They then saw clearly that it would not be possible to make a party tool of me, and soon concluded that it was their policy to ruin me if possible.

It had been clearly stated by Congress and the general government that the sole object of the war was the preservation of the Union and the prevention of the secession of the Southern States.* We fought to keep them in the Union, and the practically unanimous sentiment of the army, as well as of the mass of the people, was at that time strongly in favor of confining the war to that object. Although the Free-Soil element was strong in the North, the Abolitionists proper were weak, and a declaration of their true purposes would have seriously interfered with the progress of the war. A clear indication of the correctness of this statement lies in the fact that the executive never disowned my proclamation to the West Virginians nor the policy I pursued in reference to Kentucky.

The real object of the radical leaders was not the restoration of the Union, but the permanent ascendancy of their party, and to this they were ready to sacrifice the Union, if necessary.

* A few days before the arrival of McClellan in Washington Congress had stated the purposes of the war in a resolution :

"That the present deplorable civil war has been forced upon the country by the disunionists of the Southern States, now in revolt against the constitutional government, and in arms around the capital; that in this national emergency Congress, banishing all feeling of mere passion or resentment, will recollect only its duty to its country; that this war is not waged, on our part, in any spirit of oppression, nor for any purpose of conquest or subjugation, nor purpose of overthrowing or interfering with the rights or established institutions of those States, but to defend and maintain the supremacy of the Constitution and to preserve the Union, with all the dignity, equality, and rights of the several States unimpaired; and as soon as these objects are accomplished the war ought to cease."

They committed a grave error in supposing me to be politically ambitious and in thinking that I looked forward to military success as a means of reaching the presidential chair. At the same time they knew that if I achieved marked success my influence would necessarily be very great throughout the country—an influence which I should certainly have used for the good of the whole country, and not for that of any party at the nation's expense.

They therefore determined to ruin me in any event and by any means: first by endeavoring to force me into premature movements, knowing that a failure would probably end my military career; afterwards by withholding the means necessary to achieve success.

That they were not honest is proved by the fact that, having failed to force me to advance at a time when an advance would have been madness, they withheld the means of success when I was in contact with the enemy, and finally relieved me from command when the game was in my hands. They determined that I should not succeed, and carried out their determinations only too well and at a fearful sacrifice of blood, time, and treasure. In the East alone it is quite safe to say that we unnecessarily lost more than a quarter of a million in killed, wounded, and prisoners in consequence of my being withdrawn from the Peninsula and not properly supported. Taking both East and West, and counting the losses also by disease, I do not doubt that more than half a million of men were sacrificed unnecessarily for the sake of insuring the success of a political party.

I do not base my assertions as to the motives of the radical leaders upon mere surmises, but upon facts that have frequently come to my knowledge during the war and since. For instance, Maj. Charles Davies, once professor of mathematics at West Point, told me, and at a different time told Gen. Jos. E. Johnston, the following story:

He said that during the very early part of the Peninsular campaign he was one of a commission sent from New York to urge more vigorous action in supporting me. They called upon the President, and found Mr. Stanton with him. In reply to their statement of the purpose of their visit Mr. Stanton stated that the great end and aim of the war was to abolish slavery.

To end the war before the nation was ready for that would be a failure. The war must be prolonged, and conducted so as to achieve that. That the people of the North were not yet ready to accept that view, and that it would not answer to permit me to succeed until the people had been worked up to the proper pitch on that question. That the war would not be finished until that result was reached, and that, therefore, it was not their policy to strengthen Gen. McClellan so as to insure his success.

I have heard, from the best authority, many instances in which the same views were expressed by other prominent radical leaders. Under date of April 7, 1862, Gen. Franklin, in a letter informing me of the circumstances attending the withholding of McDowell's corps, of which his division formed part, writes: "McDowell told me that it was intended as a blow at you. That Stanton had said that you intended to work by strategy and not by fighting; that all of the opponents of the policy of the administration centred around you—in other words, that you had political aspirations. There was no friend of yours present to contradict these statements, of course."

As a further proof that the administration did not intend the Peninsular campaign to be successful may be cited the fact that on the 3d of April, 1862, ten days after I left Washington to assume command in the field, there was issued General Order No. 33, closing all the recruiting depots for the volunteers and stopping all recruiting. It is hardly credible that the members of the administration were ignorant of the fact that an army in the field must meet with some losses under the most favorable circumstances, and that to stop all supplies of men at such a juncture is the most unpardonable of follies.

From the light that has since been thrown on Stanton's character I am satisfied that from an early date he was in this treasonable conspiracy, and that his course in ingratiating himself with me, and pretending to be my friend before he was in office, was only a part of his long system of treachery.

Judge Black's papers in the *Galaxy* showed the character of the man; and it is somewhat singular that the judge began the papers for the purpose of vindicating Stanton, but that as he proceeded he became enlightened as to what the man really was.

I had never seen Mr. Stanton, and probably had not even

heard of him, before reaching Washington in 1861. Not many weeks after arriving I was introduced to him as a safe adviser on legal points. From that moment he did his best to ingratiate himself with me, and professed the warmest friendship and devotion. I had no reason to suspect his sincerity, and therefore believed him to be what he professed. The most disagreeable thing about him was the extreme virulence with which he abused the President, the administration, and the Republican party. He carried this to such an extent that I was often shocked by it.

He never spoke of the President in any other way than as the "original gorilla," and often said that Du Chaillu was a fool to wander all the way to Africa in search of what he could so easily have found at Springfield, Illinois. Nothing could be more bitter than his words and manner always were when speaking of the administration and the Republican party. He never gave them credit for honesty or patriotism, and very seldom for any ability.

At some time during the autumn of 1861 Secretary Cameron made quite an abolition speech to some newly arrived regiment. Next day Stanton urged me to arrest him for inciting to insubordination. He often advocated the propriety of my seizing the government and taking affairs into my own hands.

As he always expressed himself in favor of putting down the rebellion at any cost, I always regarded these extreme views as the ebullitions of an intense and patriotic nature, and sometimes wasted more or less time in endeavoring to bring him to more moderate views, never dreaming that all the while this man was in close communication with the very men whom he so violently abused. His purpose was to endeavor to climb upon my shoulders and then throw me down.

Several weeks before Mr. Cameron was finally removed from the War Department it came to my knowledge that a committee of New York bankers were urging upon Secretary Chase the removal of Mr. Cameron. I interfered, and by my action with the President no doubt saved him. The fact is that, so far as purely military matters were concerned, Mr. Cameron had not at all interfered with me, but gave me full support. He, so far as I knew, occupied himself solely with contracts and political affairs. The only difficulty I ever had with him—and I do not think that this point had arisen before the time in question, at all events

to a very considerable degree—was that I could not always dispose of arms and supplies as I thought the good of the service demanded. For instance, it often happened, especially toward the close of his administration, that when a shipment of unusually good arms arrived from Europe, and I wished them for the Army of the Potomac, I found that they had been promised to some political friend who might be engaged in raising a prospective regiment in some remote State, and I could not get them. So with regard to other articles of equipment, and to batteries and regiments which I desired for the Army of the Potomac. As I had no idea who might be selected in Mr. Cameron's place, and as he supported me in purely military matters, I objected to his removal and saved him. He was made aware of this at the time.

Finally, one day when I returned to my house from my day's work and was dressing for dinner, a lady of my family told me that Col. Key, one of my aides, had just been there to inform me that Mr. Cameron had resigned and that Mr. Stanton was appointed in his place. This was the first intimation that I had of the matter. Before I had finished my toilet Mr. Stanton's card came up, and as soon as possible I went down to see him. He told me that he had been appointed Secretary of War, and that his name had been sent to the Senate for confirmation, and that he had called to confer with me as to his acceptance. He said that acceptance would involve very great personal sacrifices on his part, and that the only possible inducement would be that he might have it in his power to aid me in the work of putting down the rebellion; that he was willing to devote all his time, intellect, and energy to my assistance, and that together we could soon bring the war to an end. If I wished him to accept he would do so, but only on my account; that he had come to know my wishes and determine accordingly. I told him that I hoped he would accept the position.

Soon after Mr. Stanton became Secretary of War it became clear that, without any reason known to me, our relations had completely changed. Instead of using his new position to assist me he threw every obstacle in my way, and did all in his power to create difficulty and distrust between the President and myself. I soon found it impossible to gain access to him. Before he was in office he constantly ran after me and professed the most

ardent friendship ; as soon as he became Secretary of War his whole manner changed, and I could no longer find the opportunity to transact even the ordinary current business of the office with him. It is now very clear to me that, far from being, as he had always represented himself to me, in direct and violent opposition to the radicals, he was really in secret alliance with them, and that he and they were alike unwilling that I should be successful. No other theory can possibly account for his and their course, and on that theory everything becomes clear and easily explained.

Had I been successful in my first campaign the rebellion would perhaps have been terminated without the immediate abolition of slavery. To gain their ends with the President they played upon his apprehensions for the safety of Washington—growing out of his complete ignorance of war—as well as upon his personal aspirations. I believe that the leaders of the radical branch of the Republican party preferred political control in one section of a divided country to being in the minority in a restored Union.

Not only did these people desire the abolition of slavery, but its abolition in such a manner and under such circumstances that the slaves would at once be endowed with the electoral franchise, while the intelligent white man of the South should be deprived of it, and permanent control thus be secured through the votes of the ignorant slaves, composing so large a portion of the population of the seceded States.

Influenced by these motives, they succeeded but too well in sowing the seeds of distrust in Mr. Lincoln's mind, so that, even before I actually commenced the Peninsular campaign, I had lost that cordial support of the executive which was necessary to attain success. It may be said that under these circumstances it was my duty to resign my command. But I had become warmly attached to the soldiers, who already had learned to love me well ; all my pride was wrapped up in the army that I had created, and I knew of no commander at all likely to be assigned to it in my place who would be competent to conduct its operations.

Nor did I at that time fully realize the length to which these men were prepared to go in carrying out their schemes. For instance, I did not suspect, until the orders reached me, that

Fort Monroe and the 1st corps would be withdrawn from my control; and when those orders arrived they found me too far committed to permit me to withdraw with honor. With the troops under fire it did not become me to offer my resignation.

The difficulties of my position in Washington commenced when I was first confined to my bed with typhoid fever in December and January (1861 and 1862) for some three weeks, and culminated soon after Mr. Stanton became Secretary of War. Up to this time there had been no serious difficulty; there were slight murmurs of impatience at the delay in moving, but all sensible and well-informed men saw the impossibility of entering upon a campaign at that season, and no party was as yet openly formed against me.

My malady was supposed to be more serious than it really was; for, although very weak and ill, my strong constitution enabled me to retain a clear intellect during the most trying part of the illness, so that I daily transacted business and gave the necessary orders, never for a moment abandoning the direction of affairs. As is often the case with such diseases, I sometimes passed days and nights without sleeping, and it more than once happened that the President called while I was asleep after such intervals of wakefulness, and, being denied admittance, his anxiety induced him to think that my disease was very acute and would terminate fatally. The radical leaders skilfully availed themselves of the state of affairs to drive in an entering wedge. They represented to the President that as I kept my own counsels and was not in the habit of consulting or advising with others, but acted entirely on my own judgment, no one but myself knew the exact condition of the army, its state of preparation, or the designs I had in view; that, should my malady terminate suddenly and fatally, great confusion would ensue, and that it was necessary to provide against such an emergency by causing a secret examination to be made immediately. My first inkling of this came through Mr. Stanton, not yet Secretary of War, who said to me: "They are counting on your death, and are already dividing among themselves your military goods and chattels."

The fact was that, although I was in the habit of acting solely on my own judgment, and never told more of my intentions than

was absolutely necessary, I always consulted freely with the chiefs of the staff departments, each of whom knew the exact condition of affairs in his own department and could give to any properly authorized person all necessary explanations. So that a secret examination was not only unnecessary, but could not produce as good results as the honest, direct way of coming to me and directing me to instruct my staff to explain the state of affairs to the President or Secretary of War. Gens. McDowell, Franklin, and, I think, Meigs were entrusted by the President with this business.

McDowell, who was probably at the bottom of the affair, undertook it *con amore*, hoping to succeed me in command. Franklin was unwilling to touch it, and simply acted under orders. This information reached me when the crisis of my malady was over, and learning—also through Mr. Stanton—that a grand conclave was to assemble without my knowledge, I mustered strength enough on Sunday morning (Jan. 12, 1862) to be driven to the White House, where my unexpected appearance caused very much the effect of a shell in a powder-magazine. It was very clear from the manner of those I met there that there was something of which they were ashamed.

I made no allusion to what I knew, nor was anything said to me on the subject. But I took advantage of the occasion to explain to the President in a general and casual way what my intentions were ; and before I left he told me that there was to be a meeting at the White House next day, and invited me to attend, but made no reference to the object of the meeting. At the designated hour I went to the President's office and there met a party consisting of the President, Secretaries Seward, Chase, and Blair, Gens. McDowell, Franklin, and Meigs. I do not think that the Secretary of War (Mr. Cameron) was present. I sat by Secretary Blair and Gen. Meigs, and entered into conversation with them upon topics of general interest having no possible bearing upon any subject that could be brought before the meeting. Meanwhile there was a good deal of whispering among the others, in which I do not think Franklin took any special part. Finally McDowell said he wished to explain to me the part he had in the examination, which had commenced, into the state of the army.

Exactly what he said has escaped my memory, except that he

disclaimed any purpose hostile to me, and based what had been done on the ground of the supposed critical nature of my illness. I stopped the explanation by saying that as I was now again restored to health the case had changed, and that, as the examination must now cease, further explanations were unnecessary. Franklin then said a few words clearing himself of any improper motives, which was needless, as I could not suspect him of anything wrong. I then quietly resumed my conversation with Blair and Meigs, awaiting further developments.

The whispering then recommenced, especially between the President and Secretary Chase; when at length the latter (Chase) spoke aloud, for the benefit of all assembled, in a very excited tone and manner, saying that he understood the purpose of the meeting to be that Gen. McClellan should then and there explain his military plans in detail, that they might be submitted to the approval or disapproval of the gentlemen present. The uncalled-for violence of his manner surprised me, but I determined to avail myself of it by keeping perfectly cool myself, and contented myself with remarking—what was entirely true—that the purpose he expressed was entirely new to me; that I did not recognize the Secretary of the Treasury as in any manner my official superior, and that I denied his right to question me upon the military affairs committed to my charge; that in the President and Secretary of War alone did I recognize the right to interrogate me. I then quietly resumed my conversation with Blair and Meigs, taking no further notice of Mr. Chase.

I must again state that this meeting had been arranged when I was supposed to be too ill to attend, and that the original and real purpose was not as Mr. Chase stated it, but “to dispose of the military goods and chattels” of the sick man so inopportunistically restored to life. Mr. Chase’s disappointment at this sudden frustration of his schemes accounts, I suppose, for his anger. In another connection I have already stated that some weeks before the date of this meeting I had given Mr. Chase a sketch of the proposed Urbana movement, and that he was much pleased with it. Here I need only say in addition that I did this entirely of my own volition, for the purpose indicated, and that Mr. Swinton is entirely mistaken in stating that it was by direction of the President. Mr. Chase knew at the time that the President had no knowledge of my intention of talking to him about

my plans. At this previous interview Mr. Chase seemed very grateful for the confidence I reposed in him and for my thoughtfulness in thus seeking to relieve his mind in his troubles. I presume the after-thought, and the object of the intrigues, cut short by my recovery, was to take advantage of this plan by having it carried into effect by McDowell. In no other way can I account for the uncalled-for irritation displayed. This impression is strengthened by other circumstances which will appear as I proceed with my story.

To return to the meeting. After I had thus disposed of the Secretary of the Treasury he resumed his whispering with the President, who, after the lapse of some minutes, said: "Well, Gen. McClellan, I think you had better tell us what your plans are"—or words to that effect.

To this I replied, in substance, that if the President had confidence in me it was not right or necessary to entrust my designs to the judgment of others, but that if his confidence was so slight as to require my opinions to be fortified by those of other persons it would be wiser to replace me by some one fully possessing his confidence; that no general commanding an army would willingly submit his plans to the judgment of such an assembly, in which some were incompetent to form a valuable opinion, and others incapable of keeping a secret, so that anything made known to them would soon spread over Washington and become known to the enemy. I also reminded the President that he and the Secretary of the Treasury knew in general terms what my designs were. Finally, I declined giving any further information to the meeting, unless the President gave me the order in writing and assumed the responsibility of the results.

This was probably an unexpected *dénouement*. The President was not willing to assume the responsibility; and, after a little more whispering between him and Mr. Chase, Mr. Seward arose, buttoned his coat, and laughingly said, "Well, Mr. President, I think the meeting had better break up. I don't see that we are likely to make much out of Gen. McClellan." With that the meeting adjourned. I do not think that Mr. Seward took any special part in the affair, and believe that he was on my side. Mr. Chase still continued his whispered conversation with the President. I waited until that had ceased, then walked up to the President, begged him not to allow himself to be acted upon by

improper influences, but still to trust me, and said that if he would leave military affairs to me I would be responsible that I would bring matters to a successful issue and free him from all his troubles.

The radicals never again lost their influence with the President, and henceforth directed all their efforts to prevent my achieving success. After this time Secretary Chase worked with them and became my enemy.

One of their next steps was to secure the removal of Mr. Cameron, in order to replace him by Mr. Stanton, who, while pretending to be my friend, was secretly allied with them, and no doubt made use of his pretended friendship for me to secure his appointment; for I have no reason to doubt the sincerity of the President's assertion that he had appointed him because he thought it would be agreeable to me.*

* *Note by the Editor.*—The question will naturally be asked, How came it about that Mr. Edwin M. Stanton, then a pronounced and violent opponent of the President and the administration, knew of this secret proceeding, which was concealed from all but a few confidential friends of the President and three soldiers under orders of secrecy? Also, how came it that a few days after this Mr. Stanton was brought into Mr. Lincoln's cabinet? These questions were unanswerable until the publication of the private papers of Secretary Chase, which shed ample light on them. Why Mr. Stanton revealed Mr. Chase's secret to McClellan, and enabled the latter to defeat the plot, can be conjectured. Willing to be made War Secretary by Mr. Chase's intrigues, he may not have been so willing to have McDowell, or any other general closely allied to Mr. Chase, placed in command of the army.

On the very day on which Gen. McClellan made use of Mr. Stanton's information, and left his bed to visit the President, Mr. Chase devoted himself to concentrating the plans for bringing Mr. Stanton into the cabinet. He regarded it as a matter of the highest importance, and his account, in his private diary for that day, of his method of using Secretary Cameron and Seward to accomplish his end forms a very extraordinary intermingling of piety and politics, as follows (see Warden's "Account, etc., of S. P. Chase," p. 400):

"*January 12, 1862.*—At church this morning. Wished much to join in communion, but felt myself too subject to temptation to sin. After church went to see Cameron by appointment; but being obliged to meet the President, etc., at one, could only excuse myself. At President's found Gens. McDowell, Franklin, and Meigs, and Seward and Blair. Meigs decided against dividing forces and in favor of battle in front. President said McClellan's health was much improved, and thought it best to adjourn until to-morrow, and have all then present attend with McC. at three. Home, and talk and reading. Dinner. Cameron came

My relations with Mr. Lincoln were generally very pleasant, and I seldom had trouble with him when we could meet face to face. The difficulty always arose behind my back. I believe that he liked me personally, and certainly he was always much influenced by me when we were together. During the early part of my command in Washington he often consulted with me before taking important steps or appointing general officers.

He appointed Hunter a major-general without consulting me, and a day or two afterwards explained that he did so "because the people of Illinois seemed to want somebody to be a sort of father to them, and he thought Hunter would answer that purpose."

in. . . . We talked of his going to Russia, and Stanton as successor, and he proposed I should again see the President.

"I first proposed seeing Seward, to which he assented. . . . He and I drove to Willard's, where I left him, and went myself to Seward's. I told him at once what was in my mind—that I thought the President and Cameron were both willing that C. should go to Russia. He seemed to receive the matter as new, except so far as suggested by me last night. Wanted to know who would succeed Cameron. I said Holt and Stanton had been named; that I feared Holt might embarrass us on the slavery question, and might not prove quite equal to the emergency; that Stanton was a good lawyer and full of energy, but I could not, of course, judge him as an executive officer as well as he (S.) could, for he knew him when he was in Buchanan's cabinet. Seward replied that he saw much of him then; that he was of great force, full of expedients, and thoroughly loyal.

"Finally he agreed to the whole thing, and promised to go with me to talk with the President about it to-morrow. Just at this point Cameron came in with a letter from the President proposing his nomination to Russia in the morning! He was quite offended, supposing the letter intended as a dismissal, and therefore discourteous. We both assured him it could not be so. . . . We went off together, I taking him to his house.

"Before parting I told him what had passed between me and Seward concerning Stanton, with which he was gratified. I advised him to go to the President in the morning, express his thanks for the consideration with which his wishes, made known through me as well as by himself orally, had been treated, and tell him frankly how desirable it was to him that his successor should be a Pennsylvanian and should be Stanton.

"I said I thought that his wish, supported, as it would be, by Seward and myself, would certainly be gratified, and told him that the President had already mentioned Stanton in a way which indicated that no objection on his part would be made. I said also that if he wished I would see Seward, and would go to the President, after he had left him, and urge the point. He asked, why not come in when we (he) should be there, and I assented to this. We parted, and I came home

"A day which may have—and seemingly must have—great bearing on affairs. Oh! that my heart and life were so pure and right before God that I might not hurt our great cause.

"I fear Mr. Seward may think Cameron's coming into his house prearranged, and that I was not dealing frankly. I feel satisfied, however, that I have acted right and with just deference to all concerned, and have in no respect deviated from the truth."

When he appointed, as general officers, some of the released prisoners from the first Bull Run, he afterwards explained to me that he did it as a recompense for their sufferings, unaware, no doubt, that in other armies they would have been brought before some tribunal to explain their capture.

Soon after arriving in Washington the President one day sent for me to ask my opinion of Hooker, who was urged for appointment as a brigadier-general of volunteers, and stated that he wished me to regard the conversation as strictly confidential. I told him that Hooker had been a good soldier in Mexico, but that common report stated that he had fallen in California; but that I had no personal knowledge of this, and I advised him to consult with officers who were in California with Hooker. He, however, gave him the appointment a few days later. Remembering that this conversation was sought by the President and that he desired me to regard it as confidential, it was with no little surprise that I learned, after Antietam, that Hooker had been informed of the conversation, except of its confidential nature and that it was sought by the President.

As before stated, when Stanton was made Secretary of War I knew nothing of the matter until the nomination had already gone to the Senate. Next day the President came to my house to apologize for not consulting me on the subject. He said that he knew Stanton to be a friend of mine and assumed that I would be glad to have him Secretary of War, and that he feared that if he told me beforehand "some of those fellows" would say that I had dragooned him into it.

The evening before the order appeared finally relieving me from the command of the Army of the Potomac, the elder Mr. Frank Blair drove to the Soldiers' Home to dissuade the President from relieving me, rumors being current that such a thing was in contemplation. After a long conversation Mr. Blair left with the distinct understanding that I was not to be relieved. Next morning the order appeared in the papers, and when Mr. Blair met the President in the course of the day the latter said: "Well, Mr. Blair, I was obliged to play shut-pan with you last night." Mr. Blair was my authority for this.

Officially my association with the President was very close until the severe attack of illness in December, 1861. I was often sent for to attend formal and informal cabinet meetings,

and at all hours whenever the President desired to consult with me on any subject; and he often came to my house, frequently late at night, to learn the last news before retiring. His fame as a narrator of anecdotes was fully deserved, and he always had something apropos on the spur of the moment.

Late one night, when he was at my house, I received a telegram from an officer commanding a regiment on the upper Potomac. The despatch related some very desperate fighting that had been done during the day, describing in magniloquent terms the severe nature of the contest, fierce bayonet-charges, etc., and terminated with a very small list of killed and wounded, quite out of proportion with his description of the struggle.

The President quietly listened to my reading of the telegram, and then said that it reminded him of a **notorious** liar, who attained such a reputation as an exaggerator that he finally instructed his servant to stop him, when his tongue was running too rapidly, by pulling his coat or touching his feet. One day the master was relating wonders he had seen in Europe, and described a building which was about a mile long and a half-mile high. Just then the servant's heel came down on the narrator's toes, and he stopped abruptly. One of the listeners asked how broad this remarkable building might be; the narrator modestly replied, "About a foot!"

I think he enjoyed these things quite as much as his listeners.

Long before the war, when vice-president of the Illinois Central Railroad Company, I knew Mr. Lincoln, for he was one of the counsel of the company. More than once I have been with him in out-of-the-way county-seats where some important case was being tried, and, in the lack of sleeping accommodations, have spent the night in front of a stove listening to the unceasing flow of anecdotes from his lips. He was never at a loss, and I could never quite make up my mind how many of them he had really heard before, and how many he invented on the spur of the moment. His stories were seldom refined, but were always to the point.

The President ignored all questions of weather, state of roads, and preparation, and gave orders impossible of execution. About the middle of Feb., 1862, the President having reluctantly consented to abandon his plan of operation for that

suggested by me, preparations were begun for the collection of the necessary water transportation. On the 27th of that month Mr. John Tucker, of Philadelphia, Assistant Secretary of War, was placed in charge of the procuring of the requisite steamers, etc., and performed his task with wonderful skill and energy. The President's War Order of March 8, 1862, "that any movement as aforesaid, *en route* for a new base of operations, which may be ordered by the general-in-chief, and which may be intended to move upon the Chesapeake Bay, shall begin to move upon the bay as early as the 18th March instant, and the general-in-chief shall be responsible that it moves as early as that day," was extraordinary, in view of the fact that the furnishing of transports was in no manner under my control, and that the beginning of the movement must necessarily depend upon their arrival.

When the operation by the lower Chesapeake was finally decided upon and approved by the corps commanders, it was distinctly understood that the movement would be made by the complete four corps, consisting of twelve divisions, plus the reserve artillery, engineer brigade, regular infantry and cavalry, and several cavalry regiments not assigned to the corps, and that I was authorized to form a division of 10,000 men from the troops in and near Fort Monroe and attach it to the active army. Moreover, we were assured of the active co-operation of the navy in reducing the batteries at Yorktown and Gloucester.

As my story progresses it will appear that I was deprived of five out of the thirteen infantry divisions, with their batteries, and of nine regiments of cavalry, and that I never received the co-operation of the navy in reducing the batteries at Yorktown and Gloucester.

On the 15th of March the aggregate present and absent under my command was about 233,578, taking as a basis the return of March 1; the number present for duty, including all extra-duty men, guards, etc., etc., was 203,213. Of these I purposed to leave behind, in Baltimore, Washington, and the Shenandoah, an aggregate of 66,552, brought up by new arrivals to about 77,401 at the close of March, or, deducting Gen. Dix's command, 65,621, equal to about 57,091 present for duty, with the convalescent hospitals at hand to draw upon.

Now, the estimate made of the necessary garrison of Wash-

ington by the chiefs of engineers and artillery on the 24th of Oct., 1861, was a little less than 34,000 men, including reserves, so that a force of a little over 23,000 men would have been left for the Shenandoah Valley—much more than enough under the circumstances, if properly handled.

I thus expected to take with me to the Peninsula a force of 146,122 present for duty, to be increased by a division of 10,000 formed from the troops at Fort Monroe—a total of about 156,000 men.

But the 1st corps, Blenker's division, the expected Fort Monroe division, the cavalry, etc. (afterwards taken away), amounted to about 63,000 for duty, and reduced my paper force to 93,000, which, in consequence of leaving behind many men unfit for the field, was actually reduced to 85,000, not much more than one-half of what I expected. Making the proper deduction for extra-duty men, etc., there remained only about 70,000 effectives.

Moreover, on the second day after I left Washington an order was issued breaking up all the recruiting rendezvous for volunteers, and thus abruptly stopping all recruiting at the very time it was most necessary.

I will anticipate somewhat the sequence of events, and state the manner in which these reductions of force were accomplished.

A few days before sailing for Fort Monroe I met the President, by his appointment, on a steamer at Alexandria. He informed me that he was most strongly pressed to remove Blenker's German division from my command and assign it to Fremont, who had just been placed in command of the Mountain Department. He suggested several reasons against the proposed removal of the division, to all of which I assented. He then said that he had promised to talk to me about it, that he had fulfilled his promise, and that he would not deprive me of the division.

On the 31st of March, a few hours before I sailed, I was much surprised by the receipt of the following letter:

"EXECUTIVE MANSION, WASHINGTON, March 31, 1862.

"*Maj.-Gen. McClellan:*

"MY DEAR SIR: This morning I felt constrained to order Blenker's division to Fremont; and I write this to assure you that I did so with great pain, understanding that you would wish

it otherwise. If you could know the full pressure of the case I am confident that you would justify it, even beyond a mere acknowledgment that the commander-in-chief may order what he pleases.

Yours very truly,

"A. LINCOLN."

To this it might be replied that the commander-in-chief has no right to order what he pleases; he can only order what he is convinced is right. And the President had already assured me that he knew this thing to be wrong, and had informed me that the pressure was only a political one to swell Fremont's command.

I replied that I regretted the order and could ill-afford to lose 10,000 troops who had been counted upon in arranging the plan of campaign. In a conversation the same day I repeated this, and added my regret that any other than military considerations and necessities had been allowed to govern his decision.

He then assured me that he would allow no other troops to be withdrawn from my command.

Before I left for the field Fort Monroe and its dependencies had been placed under my command, and I was authorized to form a division of 10,000 men from the troops stationed there and add it to the Army of the Potomac, placing it under Mansfield. I arrived at Fort Monroe on the afternoon of the 2d of April, and on the 3d received a telegraphic order withdrawing Fort Monroe from my command and forbidding me to remove any of Gen. Ord's troops without his sanction. No reason has ever been given for this step, and I was thus not only deprived of 10,000 more troops, but also of the control of my immediate base of operations and supplies.

On the afternoon of the 5th, the right and left wings of the army being under fire from Yorktown and the works on the line of the Warwick, I received the following telegram :

"ADJUTANT-GENERAL'S OFFICE, April 4, 1862.

"*Gen. McClellan :*

"By direction of the President, General McDowell's army corps has been detached from the forces under your immediate command, and the general is ordered to report to the Secretary of War. Letter by mail.

"L. THOMAS, *Adjutant-General.*"

In addition to the forces already enumerated, at least nine regiments of cavalry were withheld from me, and the order of April 3, discontinuing recruiting for the volunteers, rendered it impossible for me to make good the inevitable losses from disease and battle.

The effect of these changes will appear as I resume the narrative of events.

CHAPTER X.

PRIVATE LETTERS.

[*Oct. 1, 1861, to March 12, 1862.*]

Oct. —, 1861.—Yesterday rode to Chain Bridge, thence to Upton's Hill, and did not get back until after dark. . . . I can't tell you how disgusted I am becoming with these wretched politicians.

Oct. —. —. . . The enemy made some demonstrations up the river this morning, which prevented me from crossing the river until 1.30; then I rode to Munson's Hill, etc., and found everything going on well. We shall be ready by to-morrow to fight a battle there, if the enemy should choose to attack; and I don't think they will care to run the risk. I presume I shall have to go after them when I get ready; but this getting ready is slow work with such an administration. I wish I were well out of it. . . . We almost expected a little row up the river yesterday, but it amounted to nothing. The enemy fired 112 shots with artillery at our people at Great Falls, slightly grazing one man's arm and wounding a horse slightly. Fine shooting that! They must learn to do better if they hope to accomplish anything. Some of our men have been behaving most atrociously lately in burning houses; some eighteen have been burned in the last two or three days. I will issue an order to-day informing them that I will hang or shoot any found guilty of it, as well as any guards who permit it. Such things disgrace us and our cause. Our new position in advance is a fine one. It throws our camps into a fine, healthy country, with excellent drill-grounds and everything fresh and clean—an infinite improvement over our old places, where the men had been stuck down close to the river for months. It removes them also further from the city, so they will be less liable to temptation.

Oct. 2 (?).— . . . Gen. Gibson's funeral takes place this morn-

ing. I am becoming daily more disgusted with this administration—perfectly sick of it. If I could with honor resign I would quit the whole concern to-morrow; but so long as I can be of any real use to the nation in its trouble I will make the sacrifice. No one seems able to comprehend my real feeling—that I have no ambitious feelings to gratify, and only wish to serve my country in its trouble, and, when this weary war is over, to return to my wife. . . .

Oct. 6.— . . . I am quite sure that we shall spend some time here together after your recovery. Preparations are slow, and I have an infinite deal to do before my army is really ready to fight a great battle. Washington may now be looked upon as quite safe. They cannot attack it in front. My flanks are also safe, or soon will be. Then I shall take my own time to make an army that will be sure of success. . . . Gen. Scott did try to send some of my troops to Kentucky, but did not succeed. They shall not take any from here, if I can help it. The real fighting must be here: that in Kentucky will be a mere bagatelle. You need not be at all alarmed by any apprehensions you hear expressed. I have endeavored to treat Gen. Scott with the utmost respect, but it is of no avail. . . . I do not expect to fight a battle near Washington; probably none will be fought until I advance, and that I will not do until I am fully ready. My plans depend upon circumstances. So soon as I feel that my army is well organized and well disciplined, and strong enough, I will advance and force the rebels to a battle in a field of my own selection.

A long time must yet elapse before I can do this, and I expect all the newspapers to abuse me for delay; but I will not mind that.

No date.— . . . I must ride much every day, for my army covers much space. It is necessary for me to see as much as I can every day, and, more than that, to let the men see me and gain confidence in me. . . . I started out about three this afternoon and returned at ten; rode down to the vicinity of Alexandria, and on my return (*en route*) received a despatch to the effect that the rebels at 6.30 this morning were breaking up their camps at Manassas—whether to attack or retreat I do not

yet know. If they attack they will in all probability be beaten, and the attack ought to take place to-morrow. I have made every possible preparation and feel ready for them. . . .

Oct. 9.— . . . I have a long ride to take to-day; will probably advance our right some three or four miles by way of getting more elbow-room and crowding G. W. up a trifle. The more room I get the more I want, until by and by I suppose I shall be so insatiable as to think I cannot do with less than the whole State of Virginia. The storm has entirely changed the weather, and I am afraid may affect the health of the men for a few days; for it is now cold and wet. The review of yesterday passed off very well; it was a superb display, by far the finest ever seen on this continent, and rarely equalled anywhere. There were 104 guns in the review (a number greater than Lauriston's famous battery at Wagram) and 5,500 cavalry. The ground was wet, so I did not venture to let them pass at a trot or gallop; they passed only at a walk. . . . I was tired out last night. My horse was young and wild, and nearly pulled my arm off. The cheering of the men made him perfectly frantic, and, as I had to keep my cap in my right hand, I had only my left to manage him.

Oct. (10?).—I have just time to write a very few lines before starting out. Yesterday I threw forward our right some four miles, but the enemy were not accommodating enough to give us a chance at them, so I took up a new position there and reinforced it by sending McCall over to that side. I am now going over again to satisfy myself as to the state of affairs, and perhaps edge up another mile or so, according to circumstances. When I returned yesterday, after a long ride, I was obliged to attend a meeting of the cabinet at eight P.M., and was bored and annoyed. There are some of the greatest geese in the cabinet I have ever seen—enough to tax the patience of Job. . . .

Oct. (11?).— . . . I rode all over our new positions yesterday to make some little changes and correct errors, as well as to learn the ground more thoroughly myself. It rained most of the day, which did not add to the pleasure of the trip. Secesh

keeps quiet, wonderfully so. I presume he wants to draw me on to Manassas to repeat the Bull Run operation ; but I sha'n't go until ready. I may occupy Vienna in a few days, especially if he does not show himself in force ; but I am very well contented with our present positions, as places where we can drill and discipline the troops to great advantage. We have the men now in a fine open country, high and healthy, good clean, fresh and green camp-grounds, and the *morale* of an advance.

Oct. 14.—What *do* you think I received as a present yesterday? Some poor woman away up in the middle of New York sent me half a dozen pair of woollen socks—I beg pardon, I see it is from Pennsylvania, not New York. I enclose the note.

Oct. 16.— . . . Just received a telegram to the effect that the rebels had attacked a small force we have in Harper's Ferry, and had been handsomely repulsed with the loss of quite a number of men and one gun. . . . In front of us the enemy remain quiet, with the exception of occasional picket-firing.

Oct. —.— . . . I am firmly determined to force the issue with Gen. Scott. A very few days will determine whether his policy or mine is to prevail. He is for inaction and the defensive ; he endeavors to cripple me in every way ; yet I see that the newspapers begin to accuse me of want of energy. He has even complained to the War Department of my making the advance of the last few days. Hereafter the truth will be shown.

Oct. 16.—I have just been interrupted here by the President and Secretary Seward, who had nothing very particular to say, except some stories to tell, which were, as usual, very pertinent, and some pretty good. I never in my life met any one so full of anecdote as our friend. He is never at a loss for a story apropos of any known subject or incident.

Oct. 19.—Gen. Scott proposes to retire in favor of Halleck. The President and cabinet have determined to accept his retirement, but not in favor of Halleck. . . . The enemy have fallen back on Manassas, probably to draw me into the old error. I hope to make them abandon Leesburg to-morrow.

Oct. 20 or 21.— . . . I yesterday advanced a division to Dranesville, some ten miles beyond its old place, and feel obliged to take advantage of the opportunity to make numerous reconnoissances to obtain information as to the country, which is very beautiful at Dranesville, where I was yesterday. The weather is delightful. The enemy has fallen back to Centreville and Manassas, expecting us to attack there. My object in moving to Dranesville yesterday and remaining there to-day was to force them to evacuate Leesburg, which I think they did last night.

Oct. 24.—Have ridden more than forty miles to-day, and have been perfectly run down ever since I returned.

Oct. 25.— . . . How weary I am of all this business! Care after care, blunder after blunder, trick upon trick. I am well-nigh tired of the world, and, were it not for you, would be fully so. That affair of Leesburg on Monday last was a horrible butchery. The men fought nobly, but were penned up by a vastly superior force in a place where they had no retreat. The whole thing took place some forty miles from here, without my orders or knowledge. It was entirely unauthorized by me, and I am in no manner responsible for it.

Col. Baker, who was killed, was in command, and violated all military rules and precautions. Instead of meeting the enemy with double their force and a good ferry behind him, he was outnumbered three to one and had no means of retreat. Cogswell is a prisoner; he behaved very handsomely. Raymond Lee is also taken. I found things in great confusion when I arrived there. In a very short time order and confidence were restored. During the night I withdrew everything and everybody to this side of the river, which, in truth, they should never have left.

Oct. 26, 1.15 A.M.—For the last three hours I have been at Montgomery Blair's, talking with Senators Wade, Trumbull, and Chandler about war matters. They will make a desperate effort to-morrow to have Gen. Scott retired at once; until that is accomplished I can effect but little good. He is ever in my way, and I am sure does not desire effective action. I want to get

through with the war as rapidly as possible. . . . I go out soon after breakfast to review Porter's division, about five miles from here.

Oct. 30.—I know you will be astonished, but it is true, that I went this evening to a fandango. The regulars just in from Utah gave a little *soirée* to the other regulars; music, a little dancing, and some supper. I went there intending to remain ten minutes, and did stay fully an hour and a half. I met Mrs. Andrew Porter, Mrs. Palmer and her mother, Mrs. Hancock, and several other army ladies. It was very pleasant to get among old acquaintances once more.

Oct. 31.—. . . You remember my wounded friend Col. Kelly, whom we met at Wheeling? He has just done a very pretty thing at Romney—thrashed the enemy severely, taken all their guns, etc. I am very glad to hear it. . . . "Our George" they have taken it into their heads to call me. I ought to take good care of these men, for I believe they love me from the bottom of their hearts; I can see it in their faces when I pass among them. I presume the Scott war will culminate this week. Whatever it may be, I will try to do my duty to the army and to the country, with God's help and a single eye to the right. I hope that I may succeed. I appreciate all the difficulties in my path: the impatience of the people, the venality and bad faith of the politicians, the gross neglect that has occurred in obtaining arms, clothing, etc.; and, above all, I feel in my inmost soul how small is my ability in comparison with the gigantic dimensions of the task, and that, even if I had the greatest intellect that was ever given to man, the result remains in the hands of God. I do not feel that I am an instrument worthy of the great task, but I *do* feel that I did not seek it. It was thrust upon me. I was called to it; my previous life seems to have been unwittingly directed to this great end; and I know that God can accomplish the greatest results with the weakest instruments—therein lies my hope. I feel, too, that, much as we in the North have erred, the rebels have been far worse than we.

No date.—I have just returned from a ride over the river, where I went pretty late, to seek refuge in Fitz Porter's camp.

You would have laughed if you could have seen me dodge off. I quietly told the duke to get our horses saddled, and then we slipped off without escort or orderlies, and trotted away for Fitz-John's camp, where we had a quiet talk over the camp-fire. . . . I saw yesterday Gen. Scott's letter asking to be placed on the retired list and saying nothing about Halleck. The offer was to be accepted last night, and they propose to make me at once commander-in-chief of the army. I cannot get up any especial feeling about it. I feel the vast responsibility it imposes upon me. I feel a sense of relief at the prospect of having my own way untrammelled, but I cannot discover in my own heart one symptom of gratified vanity or ambition.

Nov. 2, 1.30 A.M.—I have been at work, with scarcely one minute's rest, ever since I arose yesterday morning—nearly eighteen hours. I find "the army" just about as much disorganized as was the Army of the Potomac when I assumed command; everything at sixes and sevens; no system, no order, perfect chaos. I can and will reduce it to order. I will soon have it working smoothly.

Nov. 3.—I have already been up once this morning—that was at four o'clock to escort Gen. Scott to the depot. It was pitch-dark and a pouring rain; but with most of my staff and a squadron of cavalry I saw the old man off. He was very polite to me; sent various kind messages to you and the baby; so we parted. The old man said that his sensations were very peculiar in leaving Washington and active life. I can easily understand them; and it may be that at some distant day I, too, shall totter away from Washington, a worn-out soldier, with naught to do but make my peace with God. The sight of this morning was a lesson to me which I hope not soon to forget. I saw there the end of a long, active, and ambitious life, the end of the career of the first soldier of his nation; and it was a feeble old man scarce able to walk; hardly any one there to see him off but his successor. Should I ever become vainglorious and ambitious, remind me of that spectacle. I pray every night and every morning that I may become neither vain nor ambitious, that I may be neither depressed by disaster nor elated by success, and that I may keep one single object in view—the good of my

country. At last I am the "major-general commanding the army." I do not feel in the least elated, for I do feel the responsibility of the position. And I feel the need of some support. I trust that God will aid me.

Nov. —. . . A deputation of thirty waited on me and presented me with that sword from the city of Philadelphia. It is certainly a very fine one. I listened meekly to a speech and replied in my usual way—*i.e.*, in very few words. I then had a collation—I abominate the word, it is so steamboaty—in the back parlor. Wormley did himself credit on the occasion, and got it up very well indeed. The President came in during the proceedings. . . . After that I came back and received quite a number of congratulatory calls; then went to dine with Andrew Porter, where I had a very pleasant time—Andrew and his wife, her brother, her sister-in-law, Seth, and myself.

Nov. 7.—I am very glad to learn that my order changed Gen. Scott's feelings entirely, and that he now says I am the best man and the best general that ever existed.

No date.—Yesterday I was so busily engaged in getting Halleck off to Missouri and Buell to Kentucky that I had but little time to look about me.

Nov. 10.—Yesterday worked at the office until noon and then started to review Porter's division. Got soaked and had a chill: all right this morning. Before breakfast the President and Seward came in.

Nov. 11, 1.30 A.M.—Went to Chase's at eight P.M. to meet some New York financiers; left them in good spirits. Have just finished Halleck's instructions.

Nov. —, 1861.—You will have heard the glorious news from Port Royal. Our navy has covered itself with glory and cannot receive too much credit. The thing was superbly done and the chivalry well thrashed. They left in such haste that officers forgot even to carry away their swords. But one white man was found in Beaufort, and he drunk! The negroes came flocking

down to the river with their bundles in their hands, ready to take passage. There is something inexpressibly mournful to me in that—those poor, helpless, ignorant beings, with the wide world and its uncertainties before them; the poor serf, with his little bundle, ready to launch his boat on the wide ocean of life he knows so little of. When I think of some of the features of slavery I cannot help shuddering. Just think for one moment, and try to realize that at the will of some brutal master you and I might be separated for ever! It is horrible; and when the day of adjustment comes I will, if successful, throw my sword into the scale to force an improvement in the condition of these poor blacks. I do think that some of the rights of humanity ought to be secured to the negroes. There should be no power to separate families, and the right of marriage ought to be secured to them. . . .

Nov. 12.—Last night the German division gave a grand torch-light procession and serenade. What little I saw of it was very fine, but I had to attend a pseudo cabinet meeting while it was in progress, so that I saw by no means the whole of it. Quite a party came here to see the performance.

Nov. 17.— . . . I find that to-day is not to be a day of rest for me. This unfortunate affair of Mason and Slidell has come up, and I shall be obliged to devote the day to endeavoring to get our government to take the only prompt and honorable course of avoiding a war with England and France. . . . It is sickening in the extreme, and makes me feel heavy at heart, when I see the weakness and unfitness of the poor beings who control the destinies of this great country. How I wish that God had permitted me to live quietly and unknown with you! But His will be done! I will do my best, try to preserve an honest mind, do my duty as best I may, and will ever continue to pray that He will give me that wisdom, courage, and strength that are so necessary to me now, and so little of which I possess.

The outside world envy me, no doubt. They do not know the weight of care that presses on me. . . . I will try again to write a few lines before I go to Stanton's to ascertain what the law of nations is on this Slidell and Mason seizure. . . . I went to the White House shortly after tea. I then went to the Prince

de Joinville's. We went up-stairs and had a long, confidential talk upon politics. The prince is a noble character, one whom I shall be glad to have you know well. He bears adversity so well and so uncomplainingly. I admire him more than almost any one I have ever met with. He is true as steel; like all deaf men, very reflective; says but little, and that always to the point. . . . After I left the prince's I went to Seward's, where I found the President again. . . . The President is honest and means well. As I parted from him on Seward's steps he said that it had been suggested to him that it was no more safe for me than for him to walk out at night without some attendant. I told him that I felt no fear; that no one would take the trouble to interfere with me. On which he deigned to remark that they would probably give more for my scalp at Richmond than for his. . . .

Nov. — . . . Went to the Prince de Joinville's, where I found Barry, Dahlgren, and the family. If it would at all comfort you I might do what I have never done—carry a pistol in my pocket, especially as I received two days since a lamb-like present of four revolvers of different sizes, bringing my private armory up to something like eleven pistols of various dimensions. What more can be asked of any one?

Nov. — .—Some infatuated individual sent me, a day or two ago, a "McClellan Polka." What in the world did he expect *me* to do with it? Not to whistle or dance it, I hope.

Nov. — . . . I have been at work all day nearly on a letter to the Secretary of War (Cameron) in regard to future military operations. I have not been at home for some three hours, but am concealed at Stanton's to dodge all enemies in shape of "browsing" Presidents, etc. . . .

1 A.M.—I am pretty thoroughly tired out. The paper is a very important one, as it is intended to place on record that I have left nothing undone to make this army what it ought to be, and that the necessity for delay has not been my fault. I have a set of men to deal with unscrupulous and false; if possible they will throw whatever blame there is on my shoulders, and I do not intend to be sacrificed by such people. I still trust that the all-wise Creator does not intend our destruction, and that in

His own good time He will free the nation from the men who curse it, and will restore us to His favor. I know that as a nation we have grievously sinned ; but I trust there is a limit to His wrath, and that ere long we will begin to experience His mercy. . . . I cannot guess at my movements, for they are not within my control. I cannot move without more means, and I do not possess the power to control those means.

The people think me all-powerful. Never was there a greater mistake. I am thwarted and deceived by these incapables at every turn.

I am doing all I can to get ready to move before winter sets in, but it now begins to look as if we were condemned to a winter of inactivity. If it is so the fault will not be mine ; there will be that consolation for my conscience, even if the world at large never knows it. . . .

I have one great comfort in all this—that is, that I did not seek this position, as you well know ; and I still trust that God will support me and bear me out. He could not have placed me here for nothing. . . .

Nov. 25.— . . . After dinner yesterday rode over the river. I came back after dark in a driving snow-storm. . . . It has cleared off since last night, and is quite cold to-day. It was a very disagreeable ride last night—dark as pitch, roads bad, and the snow driving hard. . . .

Nov. 27.— . . . Went to a grave consultation at Secretary Chase's in regard to the reopening of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad. . . .

After the review of the regulars I went down to the river to see the volunteer pontoniers throw a bridge-train. I went through the usual routine of being presented to an infinite number of ladies. Made a close inspection of the camp and of the men, and then returned.

Nov. 30, 1861.—I was hard at work until half-past four, when I came back to dinner. Gen. Banks dined with me. When he left I had several business calls. At eight all the officers of the 4th Infantry, just returned from California, came to pay their respects. When they left I went to Com. Goldsborough, where he, Fox, Prof. Bache, and myself remained in

serious consultation about naval and military movements until after midnight.

Sandy Hook, near Harper's Ferry, Monday A.M., Feb. 27, 1862.— . . . Here I still am. I crossed the river as soon as the bridge was finished, and watched the troops pass. It was a magnificent spectacle, one of the grandest I ever saw. As soon as my horse and escort got over I rode out to the line of pickets and saw for myself that everything was right and ready for an attack. The position is a superb one. I got over about 12 guns and 8,000 infantry before dark; also a squadron of cavalry. I heard in the afternoon a rumor that G. W. Smith was expected at Winchester with 15,000 men. Although I did not fully credit it, I nevertheless took all the military precautions necessary, and felt perfectly secure during the night. The enemy are not now in sight, but I have sent out cavalry patrols that may bring in intelligence of value. It was after dark and raining hard when I recrossed the bridge. The narrow road was so completely blocked up that it was a very difficult matter to make one's way among the wagons. It rained hard and was very cold during the night. . . . Slept in a car; I was up most of the night, telegraphing, etc. This morning it is blowing a hurricane, but the bridge stands well thus far. Burns's brigade came up during the night. I left them in the cars and crossed them this morning early. The wagons have gone over; a regiment of cavalry is now crossing, another battery will follow, and I will have everything well cleared up before the arrival of Abercrombie's brigade, which should be here by two o'clock. I will get it over before dark, also the heavy artillery and regular cavalry, if it arrives. I hope to be able to occupy Charleston tomorrow and get Lander to Martinsburg. It will then require but a short time to finish matters here. The roads on the other side are good; the country more open than near Washington. You have no idea how the wind is howling now—a perfect tornado; it makes the crossing of the river very difficult, and interferes with everything. I am anxious about our bridge. . . .

Fairfax Court-House, March 11, 1862.— . . . None of our wagons came up until after I rode out this morning, so we got along as best we could last night. Some one lent me some blan-

kets, and somebody else a cot, so I was very well off. To-night I have my own bed. I started at about nine this morning and rode first to Centreville. We found there quite a formidable series of works, which would have been somewhat uncomfortable for new troops to carry by storm. Thence I rode over horrid roads to the celebrated Manassas, which we found also abandoned. Thence to the battle-field of last July, and over pretty much the whole of it. Thence home *via* Stone Bridge and Centreville, reaching here about half-past eight. I rode Kentuck to-day, and as he was fretful he fatigued me very much, so that it is impossible for me to go to Washington to-night, notwithstanding your father's pressing telegram. I regret that the rascals are after me again. I had been foolish enough to hope that when I went into the field they would give me some rest, but it seems otherwise. Perhaps I should have expected it. If I can get out of this scrape you will never catch me in the power of such a set again. The idea of persecuting a man behind his back! I suppose they are now relieved from the pressure of their fears by the retreat of the enemy, and that they will increase in virulence. Well, enough of that; it is bad enough for me to be bothered in that way without annoying you with it. The country which we passed to-day was very desolate. I think Manassas is the most desolate and forbidding spot I ever beheld. They have not destroyed many of their winter-quarters, which are very well built and comfortable—far more so than I expected to see them. From the great number of camps scattered about it is evident that they had a very large force here. They must have left in a great hurry, for they abandoned a great deal of baggage, tents, stores, ammunition, caissons, wagons, etc. It seems that the order was given very suddenly. They left on Sunday, except a rear-guard. It is said by "intelligent contrabands" and others that the men were very much disgusted and disheartened. . .

CHAPTER XI.

Events in and around Washington—Ball's Bluff—Harper's Ferry—Stanton's trick—Enemy's batteries on the Potomac.

ON the 9th of Oct. McCall's division marched from Tennallytown to Langley, on the Virginia side of the Potomac. This addition to the forces already there enabled me to push reconnaissances more actively; and as it was particularly desirable to obtain accurate information in regard to the topography of the country in front of our right, Gen. McCall was ordered to move on the 19th as far as Dranesville, to cover the work of the topographical engineers directed to prepare maps of that region. On the 20th Gen. Smith pushed out strong parties to Freedom Hill, Vienna, Flint Hill, Peacock Hill, etc., with a similar object.

From his destination Gen. McCall sent the following despatch:

"DRANESVILLE, Oct. 19, 1861, 6.30 P.M.

"*To Gen. McClellan:*

"I arrived here this morning. All is quiet. No enemy seen. Country for one mile beyond Difficult creek broken and woody. Bad country to manœuvre. Nothing but skirmishing could be done by infantry. Artillery could not leave the road. One mile beyond Difficult creek the country becomes open; some pretty battle-fields. Country high. I shall bivouac here to-night. Park is with me.

"(Signed)

GEO. A. MCCALL."

He remained near Dranesville during the whole of the 20th, covering the operations of the topographical engineers. On the morning of the 21st he sent me the following despatch:

"CAMP NEAR DRANESVILLE, VA.,
Oct. 21, 1861, 6.30 A.M.

"*Maj.-Gen. Geo. B. McClellan:*

"GENERAL: In a couple of hours we shall have completed the plane-table survey to the ground I first occupied one and one-

half miles in front, and, by odometer or by observation, all the cross-roads this side of the point where we met Gen. Smith's parties, from the Alexandria pike to the L. and H. R. R., and the more northern ones from the pike to the river.

"On the return march the plane-table will be at work on the Leesburg and Georgetown pike, and the side-roads to the river will be examined. . . .

"Very respectfully,

"GEO. A. MCCALL,
"Brig.-Gen."

On the 12th of Oct. Gen. Stone telegraphed that he thought the enemy were entrenching between Conrad's Ferry and Leesburg, about one mile from the town. In the morning of the 13th he telegraphed that the enemy had strengthened their force opposite Harrison's island by one or two regiments from below, and that much work was going on in the way of new batteries and lines, and strengthening old ones. At night on the same day he telegraphed that work had been done at Smart's Hill, that the pickets near Mason's island were largely reinforced, and that he anticipated an early attempt by the enemy to secure Mason's or Harrison's island, perhaps both, but probably the latter, commanded, as it was, by the bluffs on their side.

On the 15th he telegraphed that there was considerable movement between the river and Leesburg—apparently preparations for resistance rather than attack. On the 18th, at 10.45 P.M., he telegraphed that the enemy's pickets were withdrawn from most of the posts in our front; that he had sent an officer over the river within two miles of Leesburg the same evening, and that he should push the reconnoissances farther the following day, if all remained favorable.

Such was the state of affairs when, on the morning of the 20th, I received the following telegram from Gen. Banks's headquarters:

"DARNESTOWN, Oct. 20, 1861.

"SIR: The signal station at Sugar Loaf telegraphs that the enemy have moved away from Leesburg. All quiet here.

"R. M. COPELAND,
Assist. Adj.-Gen."

"Gen. MARCY.

Whereupon I sent to Gen. Stone, at Poolesville, the following telegram:

CAMP GRIFFIN, Oct. 20, 1861.

Gen. McClellan desires me to inform you that Gen. McCall occupied Dranesville yesterday, and is still there. Will send out heavy reconnoissances to-day in all directions from that point. The general desires that you will keep a good look-out upon Leesburg, to see if this movement has the effect to drive them away. Perhaps a slight demonstration on your part would have the effect to move them.

A. V. COLBURN,
Assist. Adjt.-Gen.

Brig.-Gen. C. P. STONE, *Poolesville.*

Deeming it possible that Gen. McCall's movement to Dranesville, together with the subsequent reconnoissances, might have the effect of inducing the enemy to abandon Leesburg, and the despatch from Sugar Loaf appearing to confirm this view, I wished Gen. Stone—who had only a line of pickets on the river, the mass of his troops being out of sight of, and beyond range from, the Virginia bank—to make some display of an intention to cross, and also to watch the enemy more closely than usual. I did not direct him to cross, nor did I intend that he should cross the river in force for the purpose of fighting.

The above despatch was sent on the 20th, and reached Gen. Stone as early as eleven A.M. of that day. I expected him to accomplish all that was intended on the same day; and this he did, as will be seen from the following despatch, received at my headquarters in Washington from Poolesville on the evening of Oct. 20:

"Made a feint of crossing at this place this afternoon, and at the same time started a reconnoitring party towards Leesburg from Harrison's island. The enemy's pickets retired to entrenchments. Report of reconnoitring party not yet received. I have means of crossing one hundred and twenty-five men once in ten minutes at each of two points. River falling slowly.

"C. P. STONE,
"Brig.-Gen.

"Maj.-Gen. McCLELLAN."

As it was not foreseen or expected that Gen. McCall would be needed to co-operate with Gen. Stone in any way, he had been directed to fall back from Dranesville to his original camp, near Prospect Hill, as soon as the required reconnoissances were completed.

Accordingly he left Dranesville, on his return, at about 8.30 A.M. of the 21st, reaching his old camp at about one P.M.

In the meantime I was surprised to hear from Gen. Stone that a portion of his troops were engaged on the Virginia side of the river, and at once sent instructions to Gen. McCall to remain at Dranesville, if he had not left before the order reached him.

The order did not reach him until his return to his camp at Prospect Hill. He was then ordered to rest his men, and hold his division in readiness to return to Dranesville at a moment's notice, should it become necessary. Similar instructions were given to other divisions during the afternoon.

The first intimation I received from Gen. Stone of the real nature of his movements was in a telegram, as follows :

"EDWARD'S FERRY, Oct. 21, 11.10 A.M.

"The enemy have been engaged opposite Harrison's island ; our men are behaving admirably.

"C. P. STONE,
"Brig.-Gen.

"Maj.-Gen. McCLELLAN."

At two P.M. Gen. Banks's adjutant-general sent the following :

"DARNESTOWN, Oct. 21, 1861, 2 P.M.

"Gen. Stone safely crossed the river this morning. Some engagements have taken place on the other side of the river—how important is not known.

"R. M. COPELAND,
"Act. Assist. Adj.-Gen.

"Gen. R. B. MARCY."

Gen. Stone sent the following despatches :

"EDWARD'S FERRY, Oct. 21, 1861, 2 P.M.

"There has been sharp firing on the right of our line, and our troops appear to be advancing there under Baker. The left, under Gorman, has advanced its skirmishers nearly one mile, and, if the movement continues successful, will turn the enemy's right.

"C. P. STONE,
"Brig.-Gen.

"To Maj.-Gen. McCLELLAN."

"EDWARD'S FERRY, Oct. 21, 1861, 2.20 P.M.

"To Gen. Marcy:

"We cross at Edward's Ferry in flat-boats—these which we have built, capacity forty-five men each—and in one canal-boat, capacity two hundred men; at Harrison's island in four flat-boats and four row-boats. There is a road from Seneca to Edward's Ferry, and from Edward's Ferry to Leesburg; also a road from opposite Seneca to the Leesburg road. The mounted men will be held in readiness. Firing pretty heavy on our right. . . .

"C. P. STONE,
"Brig.-Gen."

This was in reply to an inquiry as to his means of crossing and the roads, also directing him to hold mounted men ready to transmit frequent reports.

"EDWARD'S FERRY, Oct. 21, 1861, 4 P.M.

"Nearly all my force is across the river. Baker on the right, Gorman on the left. Right sharply engaged.

"C. P. STONE,
"Brig.-Gen."

"To Gen. McCLELLAN."

"EDWARD'S FERRY, Oct. 21, 1861, 6 P.M.

"Have called on Banks for a brigade, and he has ordered up Hamilton's. I think it would be well to send up a division on the other side of the river. I think they have been reinforced.

"C. P. STONE,
"Brig.-Gen."

The nearest division on the Virginia side (McCall's) was more than twenty miles from the scene of action, so that it could not have arrived before noon of the 22d—too late to be of any service. Moreover, its line of march would have passed not more than eleven or twelve miles from the enemy's position at Centreville, and it would thus have been exposed to be cut off, unless supported by a general movement of the Army of the Potomac, which there was nothing to justify, according to the information at that time (6.30 P.M.) in my possession. The orders I had already sent to Banks seemed best adapted to the case, as the event proved.

"EDWARD'S FERRY, Oct. 21, 1861, 6.45 P.M.

"*To Maj.-Gen. McClellan:*

"Col. Baker has been killed at the head of his brigade. I go to the right at once.

"C. P. STONE,
"Brig.-Gen."

Gen. Stone was evidently misinformed, as Col. Baker had only one battalion of his brigade with him.

"EDWARD'S FERRY, Oct. 21, 1861, 9.30 P.M.

"*To Gen. McClellan:*

"I am occupied in preventing further disaster, and try to get into a position to redeem. We have lost some of our best commanders—Baker dead, Cogswell a prisoner or secreted. The wounded are being carefully and rapidly removed, and Gorman's wing is being cautiously withdrawn. Any advance from Dranesville must be made cautiously. All was reported going well up to Baker's death, but in the confusion following that the right wing was outflanked. In a few hours I shall, unless a night-attack is made, be in the same position as last night, save the loss of many good men.

"C. P. STONE,
"Brig.-Gen."

Although not fully informed of the state of affairs, I had, during the afternoon, as a precautionary measure, ordered Gen. Banks to send one brigade to the support of the troops at Harrison's island, and to move with the other two to Seneca Mills, ready to support Gen. Stone, if necessary. The 9.30 P.M. despatch of Gen. Stone did not give me entire understanding of the state of the case.

Aware of the difficulties and perhaps fatal consequences of attempting to recross such a river as the Potomac after a repulse, and from these telegrams supposing his whole force to be on the Virginia side, I sent the following telegram:

HEADQUARTERS, ARMY OF THE POTOMAC,
Oct. 21, 1861, 10.30 P.M.

To Gen. C. P. Stone, Edward's Ferry:

Entrench yourself on the Virginia side and await reinforcements, if necessary.

GEO. B. McCLELLAN,
Maj.-Gen. Commanding.

Shortly after the following :

To Gen. C. P. Stone :

Hold your position on the Virginia side of the Potomac at all hazards. Gen. Banks will support you, with one brigade at Harrison's island and the other two at Seneca. Lander will be with you at daylight.

GEO. B. McCLELLAN,
Maj.-Gen. Commanding.

P.S. Change the disposition of Gen. Banks's division, if you think it necessary, so as to send two brigades to Harrison's island instead of one.

About the same time I sent the following :

HEADQUARTERS, ARMY OF THE POTOMAC,
Oct. 21, 1861, 10.45 P.M.

To Gen. N. P. Banks :

Push forward your command as rapidly as possible, and put as many men over the river to reinforce Gen. Stone as you can before daylight. Gen. Stone is directed to hold his command on the Virginia side of the Potomac at all hazards, and informed that you will support him. You will assume command when you join Gen. Stone.

GEO. B. McCLELLAN,
Maj.-Gen. Commanding.

The following despatches were next received :

"EDWARD'S FERRY, Oct. 21, 11 P.M.

"To Maj.-Gen. McClellan :

"We hold the ground half a mile back of Edward's Ferry on Virginia shore. Harrison's island has parts of thirteen companies, only seven hundred (700) men, and will soon be reinforced by one hundred fresh men, besides what support Hamilton brings. I cover the shore opposite this with guns, and am disposing others to help the defence of Harrison's. I think the men will fight well. Entrenchments ordered this morning.

"C. P. STONE,
"Brig.-Gen."

"HEADQUARTERS, SENECA MILLS,
Oct. 21, 11 P.M.

"To Gen. McClellan :

"Arrived here at nine and a half o'clock. Gen. Stone tele-

graphs for whole division immediately. Col. Baker is killed, and some trouble exists on his right. We go at once.

"N. P. BANKS,
"Maj.-Gen. Commanding Division."

Hamilton's brigade arrived at midnight, and Gen. Banks with the remainder of his division reached Edward's Ferry at three A.M. of the 22d. He found Gen. Stone on the Maryland side, and reported that he ascertained that at no time had more than one-third of his (Gen. Stone's) troops crossed. Assuming command, and consulting with the generals present, he telegraphed me the facts, and received a reply directing him to send over men enough to hold the opposite side, with orders to entrench themselves; all of which was done. During the afternoon there was a skirmish, in the course of which Gen. Lander was wounded.

Meanwhile Gen. Banks had collected all the canal-boats to be found, in order to increase the means of transportation. I reached Edward's Ferry during the evening of the 22d and assumed command. Passing through Poolesville, I first learned the actual condition of affairs and the details of what had occurred, and sent the following:

POOLESVILLE, Oct. 22, 5.30 P.M.

To President Lincoln:

From what I learn here the affair of yesterday was a more serious disaster than I had supposed. Our loss in prisoners and killed was severe. I leave at once for Edward's Ferry.

GEO. B. MCCLELLAN,
Maj.-Gen. Commanding.

The following extract from the evidence of Gen. Stone before the "Committee on the Conduct of the War" on the 5th of Jan., 1862, will throw further light on this occurrence:

Gen. Stone says he received the order from my headquarters to make a slight demonstration at about eleven o'clock A.M. on the 20th, and that, in obedience to that order, he made the demonstration on the evening of the same day.

In regard to the reconnoissance on the 21st, which resulted in the battle of Ball's Bluff, he was asked the following questions:

Question. "Did this reconnoissance originate with yourself, or had you orders from the general-in-chief to make it?"

To which he replied : " It originated with myself—the reconnoissance."

Question. " The order did not proceed from Gen. McClellan?"

Answer. " I was directed the day before to make a demonstration; that demonstration was made the day previous."

Question. " Did you receive an order from the general-in-chief to make the reconnoissance?"

Answer. " No, sir."

Making a personal examination on the 23d, I found that the position on the Virginia side at Edward's Ferry was not a tenable one, but did not think it wise to withdraw the troops by daylight. I therefore caused more artillery to be placed in position on the Maryland side to cover the approaches to the ground held by us, and crossed the few additional troops that the high wind permitted us to get over, so as to be as secure as possible against any attack during the day.

Up to six o'clock I kept my intention secret, all supposing that I intended to advance on Leesburg. My object was not to discourage the command in the event of their being attacked. At six o'clock I sent to Gen. Stone, then on the Virginia side of the river, the detailed instructions for the withdrawal of the troops during the night. Before nightfall all the precautions were taken to secure an orderly and quiet passage of the troops and guns.

The movement was commenced soon after dark, under the personal supervision of Gen. Stone, who received the order for the withdrawal at 7.15 P.M. By four A.M. of the 24th everything had reached the Maryland shore in safety. A few days afterwards I received information, which seemed to be authentic, to the effect that large bodies of the enemy had been ordered from Manassas to Leesburg to cut off our troops on the Virginia side. Their timely withdrawal probably prevented a still more serious disaster. Gen. Stone's report of this battle and his testimony before the Committee on the Conduct of the War furnish further details.

Gen. Banks's division deserves great credit for its rapid night-march to the relief of General Stone. On the 24th the total loss in killed, wounded, and missing was reported at 680, with stragglers constantly coming in.

The true story of the affair of Ball's Bluff is, in brief, as follows :

One of Gen. Stone's officers, Capt. Philbrick, of the 15th Mass., thought that he had discovered a camp of the enemy about one mile beyond Harrison's island in the direction of Leesburg. Having completed the feint of crossing made in the course of the 20th, Gen. Stone at 10.30 P.M. of the same day issued his orders for the surprise of the supposed camp at daybreak of the 21st. Col. Devens, of the 15th Mass., was entrusted with the duty, with four companies of his regiment. Col. Lee, of the 20th Mass., was directed to replace Col. Devens in Harrison's island with four companies of his own regiment, one of which was to pass over to the Virginia shore and hold the heights there to cover Col. Devens's return. Col. Devens was directed to "attack the camp at daybreak, and, having routed, to pursue them as far as he deems prudent, and to destroy the camp, if practicable, before returning." "He will make all the observations possible on the country, will, under all circumstances, keep his command well in hand, and not sacrifice this to any supposed advantages of rapid pursuit. Having accomplished this duty, Col. Devens will return to his present position, unless he shall see one on the Virginia side near the river which he can undoubtedly hold until reinforced, and one which can be successfully held against largely superior numbers. In which case he will hold on and report."

In obedience to these orders Col. Devens crossed about midnight with five companies (instead of four), numbering about 300 men, and halted until daybreak in an open field near the bluffs bordering the shore. While there he was joined by Col. Lee with 100 men of the 20th Mass., who halted here to cover his return.

At daybreak he advanced about a mile towards Leesburg, and then discovered that the supposed camp did not exist. After examining the vicinity and discovering no traces of the enemy, he determined not to return at once, but at about half-past six A.M. sent a non-commissioned officer to report to Gen. Stone that he thought he could remain where he was until reinforced. At about seven o'clock a company of hostile riflemen were observed on the right, and a slight skirmish ensued. A company of cavalry being soon observed on the left, the skirmishers were drawn back to the woods, and, after waiting half an hour for

attack, the command was withdrawn to the position held by Col. Lee ; but, after again scouting the woods, Col. Devens returned to his advanced position. About eight o'clock the messenger returned from Gen. Stone with orders for Col. Devens to remain where he was, and that he would be reinforced. The messenger was again sent back to report the skirmish that had taken place. Col. Devens then threw out skirmishers and awaited reinforcements. At about ten o'clock the messenger again returned with the information that Col. Baker would soon arrive with his brigade and take command. Between nine and eleven Col. Devens was joined by Lieut.-Col. Learned with the remainder of the 15th, bringing up his command to 28 officers and 625 men.

About midday Col. Devens learned that the enemy were gathering on his left, and about half-past twelve or one he was strongly attacked ; and as he was in great danger of being out-flanked, and no reinforcements had arrived, at about a quarter-past two he fell back to the bluff, where he found Col. Baker, who directed him to take the right of the position he proposed to occupy ; the centre and left being composed of about 300 men of the 20th Mass., under Col. Lee, and a battalion of the California regiment about 600 strong. Two howitzers and a 6-pounder were also in line.

At about three o'clock the enemy attacked in force, the weight of his attack being on our centre and left. At about four our artillery was silenced, and Col. Devens was ordered to send two of his companies to support the left of our line ; shortly after he learned that Col. Baker had been killed. Col. Cogswell then assumed command, and, after a vain attempt to cut his way through to Edward's Ferry, was obliged to give the order to retreat to the river-bank and direct the men to save themselves as best they could.

I have gone thus much into detail because at the time I was much criticised and blamed for this unfortunate affair, while I was in no sense responsible for it.

Early in 1862 it was determined to attempt the reopening of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad as far eastward from Cumberland as circumstances would justify.

Gen. F. W. Lander was ordered to cover this operation from Cumberland towards Hancock, and on the 5th of Jan. reached Hancock *en route* to his destination. He found Jackson on the

opposite bank of the Potomac, tearing up rails, etc. Shortly after his arrival Lander was summoned by Jackson to surrender; this, of course, was a mere act of bravado, for it is not probable that Jackson had the slightest intention of crossing the river. The enemy fired a few shells into Hancock, doing little or no damage. Gen. Banks sent reinforcements to Hancock under Gen. Williams, who remained in that vicinity for some time. Jackson now moved towards Bloomery Gap and Romney, whither Lander was ordered to go. The force at Romney being insufficient to hold the place and its communications, Lander was instructed to fall back to the mouth of Patterson's creek, where he awaited the arrival of reinforcements now on the way to him.

Finding it difficult to procure supplies, and not venturing to attack Lander in his position, Jackson fell back from Romney to Unger's Store with the mass of his force about the 23d of Jan. About the 5th of Feb. Lander obliged him to evacuate Romney entirely.

Lander now moved his headquarters to the Paw Paw Tunnel, from which position he covered the reconstruction of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad, which was reopened from the west to Hancock on the 14th of Feb. On the 13th he made a very dashing attack upon a party of the enemy at Bloomery Gap, taking several prisoners and dispersing the rest.

Notwithstanding the severe illness from which he suffered, Lander remained at Paw Paw, covering the railroad and keeping the country clear of the enemy, until the 28th of Feb., when he was ordered to move to Bunker Hill to co-operate with Gen. Banks, then at Charlestown, covering the rebuilding of the railroad as he advanced. While engaged in preparing to execute this order his disease assumed a more violent form, and on the 2d of March this gallant officer breathed his last. On some occasions during this brief campaign I was obliged to check Lander rather abruptly for attempting to assume control over troops not under his command, and for endeavoring to initiate some very rash movements when the great risk could not be counterbalanced by the very faint chances of success. These errors arose partly from inexperience, and also, no doubt, from the effects of the malady which so soon terminated his life.

These occurrences did not change my feeling towards him, and I doubt whether they influenced his for me.

I had often observed to the President and to members of the cabinet that the reconstruction of this railway could not be undertaken until we were in a condition to fight a battle to secure it. I regarded the possession of Winchester and Strasburg as necessary to cover the railway in the rear, and it was not till the month of February that I felt prepared to accomplish this very desirable but not vital purpose.

The whole of Banks's division and two brigades of Sedgwick's division were thrown across the river at Harper's Ferry, leaving one brigade of Sedgwick's division to observe and guard the Potomac from Great Falls to the mouth of the Monocacy. A sufficient number of troops of all arms were held in readiness in the vicinity of Washington, either to march *via* Leesburg or to move by rail to Harper's Ferry, should this become necessary in carrying out the objects in view.

The subjoined Notes from a communication subsequently addressed to the War Department will sufficiently explain the conduct of these operations :

NOTES.

When I started for Harper's Ferry I plainly stated to the President and Secretary of War that the chief object of the operation would be to open the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad by crossing the river in force at Harper's Ferry ; that I had collected the material for making a permanent bridge by means of canal-boats ; that, from the nature of the river, it was doubtful whether such a bridge could be constructed ; that if it could not I would at least occupy the ground in front of Harper's Ferry, in order to cover the rebuilding of the railroad bridge ; and finally, when the communications were perfectly secure, move on Winchester.

When I arrived at the place I found the bateau bridge nearly completed ; the holding-ground proved better than had been anticipated ; the weather was favorable, there being no wind. I at once crossed over the two brigades which had arrived, and took steps to hurry up the other two, belonging respectively to Banks's and Sedgwick's divisions. The difficulty of crossing supplies had not then become apparent. That night I telegraphed for a regiment of regular cavalry and four batteries of heavy artillery to come up the next day (Thursday), besides directing Keyes's division of infantry to be moved up on Friday.

Next morning the attempt was made to pass the canal-boats

through the lift-lock, in order to commence at once the construction of a permanent bridge. It was then found for the first time that the lock was too small to permit the passage of the boats, it having been built for a class of boats running on the Shenandoah canal, and too narrow by some four or six inches for the canal-boats. The lift-locks, above and below, are all large enough for the ordinary boats. I had seen them at Edward's Ferry thus used. It had always been represented to the engineers by the military railroad employees and others that the lock *was* large enough, and, the difference being too small to be detected by the eye, no one had thought of measuring it or suspected any difficulty. I thus suddenly found myself unable to build the permanent bridge. A violent gale had arisen, which threatened the safety of our only means of communication; the narrow approach to the bridge was so crowded and clogged with wagons that it was very clear that, under existing circumstances, nothing more could be done than to cross over the baggage and supplies of the two brigades. Of these, instead of being able to cross both during the morning, the last arrived only in time to go over just before dark. It was evident that the troops under orders would only be in the way, should they arrive, and that it would not be possible to subsist them for a rapid march on Winchester. It was therefore deemed necessary to countermand the order, content ourselves with covering the reopening of the railroad for the present, and in the meantime use every exertion to establish, as promptly as possible, depots of forage and subsistence on the Virginia side to supply the troops and enable them to move on Winchester independently of the bridge. The next day (Friday) I sent a strong reconnoissance to Charlestown, and, under its protection, went there myself. I then determined to hold that place, and to move the troops composing Lander's and Williams's commands at once on Martinsburg and Bunker Hill, thus effectually covering the reconstruction of the railroad.

Having done this, and taken all the steps in my power to insure the rapid transmission of supplies over the river, I returned to this city, well satisfied with what had been accomplished. While up the river I learned that the President was dissatisfied with the state of affairs; but, on my return here, understood from the Secretary of War that upon learning the whole state of the case the President was fully satisfied. I contented myself, therefore, with giving to the secretary a brief statement, about as I have written it here; he did not even require that much of me. He was busy; I troubled him as little as possible, and immediately went to work at other important affairs.

The design aimed at was entirely accomplished, and the

railroad was in running order before I started for the Peninsula. As a demonstration against his left flank this movement had much to do with the enemy's evacuation of his position at Manassas on the 8th and 9th of March; and I should state that I made the movement unwillingly, because I anticipated precisely that effect, and did not wish them to move from Manassas until I had fairly commenced the movement to the lower Chesapeake. But the pressure was so strong that I could not resist it; and this was no doubt the best and easiest way to force the navigation of the lower Potomac, which the administration laid so much stress upon. They had neither the courage nor the military insight to understand the effect of the plan I desired to carry out.

Immediately upon my return from Harper's Ferry I called upon the secretary and handed him the memorandum referred to in the "Notes" just given, expressing a desire to explain the matter personally to the President. The secretary said that the President now understood the whole affair, but that he would hand him my memorandum. He told me, a day or two afterwards, that he had done so, and that the President was entirely satisfied with my conduct, and desired me not to mention the subject to the President. I was foolish enough to believe him, and acted accordingly. The following telegrams will aid in giving the true state of the case:

"WASHINGTON, Feb. 28, 1862.

"*Gen. McClellan:*

"What do you propose to do with the troops that have crossed the Potomac?

"E. M. STANTON,
"Sec. of War."

To this I replied:

SANDY HOOK, Feb. 28, 1862.

Hon. E. M. Stanton, Sec. of War:

Your despatch received. I propose to occupy Charlestown and Bunker Hill, so as to cover the rebuilding of the railway, while I throw over the supplies necessary for an advance in force. I have quite men enough to accomplish this. I could not at present supply more.

GEORGE B. McCLELLAN,
Maj.-Gen. Commanding.

On the same day I telegraphed to the President as follows:

It is impossible for many days to do more than supply the troops now here and at Charlestown. We could not supply a movement to Winchester for many days, and had I more troops here they would have been at a loss for food on the Virginia side. I know that I have acted wisely and that you will cheerfully agree with me when I explain. I have arranged to establish depots on that side, so we can do what we please. I have secured opening road.

GEORGE B. MCCLELLAN,
Maj.-Gen. Commanding.

On the same day I telegraphed to Gen. Lander as follows:

We hold Charlestown. As soon as possible please occupy Bunker Hill and communicate with Banks at Charlestown. Scout well towards Winchester. Push the repairs of the railway rapidly. Get free of this business. I want you with me in another direction.

GEORGE B. MCCLELLAN,
Maj.-Gen. Commanding.

It was a part of Mr. Stanton's policy—only too well carried out—to prevent frequent personal interviews between the President and myself; he was thus enabled to say one thing to the President and exactly the opposite to me. A few days later, on the 8th of March, the President sent for me at an early hour in the morning, about half-past seven, and I found him in his office. He appeared much concerned about something, and soon said that he wished to talk with me about "a very ugly matter." I asked what it was; and, as he still hesitated, I said that the sooner and more directly such things were approached the better.

He then referred to the Harper's Ferry affair (the boats being too wide for the lift-locks, etc.), upon which I found that the secretary had deceived me when he said that the President was satisfied. I told him what had passed between the secretary and myself (as related above), at which he was much surprised. He told me that he had never heard of my memorandum or of any explanation on my part. I then gave him my statement of the matter, with which he expressed himself entirely satisfied.

He then adverted to the more serious—or ugly—matter, and now the effects of the intrigues by which he had been surrounded became apparent. He said that it had been repre-

sented to him (and he certainly conveyed to me the distinct impression that he regarded these representations as well founded) that my plan of campaign (which was to leave Washington under the protection of a sufficient garrison, its numerous well-built and well-armed fortifications, and the command of Banks, then in the Shenandoah Valley, and to throw the whole active army suddenly by water from Annapolis and Alexandria to the forts on James river, and thence by the shortest route upon Richmond) was conceived with the traitorous intent of removing its defenders from Washington, and thus giving over to the enemy the capital and the government, thus left defenceless.

It is difficult to understand that a man of Mr. Lincoln's intelligence could give ear to such abominable nonsense. I was seated when he said this, concluding with the remark that it did look to him much like treason. Upon this I arose, and, in a manner perhaps not altogether decorous towards the chief magistrate, desired that he should retract the expression, telling him that I could permit no one to couple the word treason with my name. He was much agitated, and at once disclaimed any idea of considering me a traitor, and said that he merely repeated what others had said, and that he did not believe a word of it. I suggested caution in the use of language, and again said that I would permit no doubt to be thrown upon my intentions; whereupon he again apologized and disclaimed any purpose of impugning my motives.

I then informed him that I had called a meeting of the generals of division for that day with reference to the proposed attack upon the enemy's Potomac batteries, and suggested that my plan should be laid before them in order that he might be satisfied. This was done, and I heard no more of treason in that connection.

Before leaving this subject I will call attention to the fact that my official report contained the statement that the secretary had assured me of the President's approval of my action when I returned from the upper Potomac, and that this assertion was never denied. Moreover, no other statement made in the memorandum was ever denied or objected to either by the President or the secretary; and that memorandum shows very clearly that there was no ground of dissatisfaction with my conduct, but that

I did precisely what I told them I should do under given circumstances.

In my official report I have given all necessary information as to the reasons which prevented an attack upon the enemy's batteries on the Potomac. I will here repeat only that careful reconnoissances and a full consideration of the matter led to the inevitable conclusion that although we might, at a greater or less sacrifice of life, carry and destroy any particular battery, we could prevent the construction of permanent batteries and the employment of rifled field-batteries only by a general movement of the army to drive the enemy entirely behind the Rappahannock and Rapidan, after a general action; and that it would then be necessary to hold the lines of those rivers in force or continue the campaign by the overland route.

I did not regard the inconvenience resulting from the presence of the enemy's batteries on the Potomac as sufficiently great to justify the direct efforts necessary to dislodge them, especially since it was absolutely certain that they would evacuate all their positions as soon as they became aware of the movement to the James and York rivers.

It was therefore with the greatest reluctance that I made the arrangements required to carry out the positive orders of the government, and it was with great satisfaction that I found myself relieved from the necessity of making what I knew to be a false and unnecessary movement.

When the enemy abandoned his position on the 8th and 9th of March, the roads were still in such a condition as to make the proposed movement upon the batteries impracticable. Before this time I had strongly and repeatedly urged upon the Navy Department the propriety of hastening the completion of the *Monitor*, that she might be sent to the Potomac to try her hand upon the batteries on its banks. As the reason for this I urged that it was well to try her qualities under fire, when necessary repairs and alterations could readily be made, rather than to send her immediately to New Orleans, as had been intended. It is a little singular that the effect of my urgency was to hasten her completion, so that she arrived in Hampton Roads in season to check the operations of the *Merrimac*.

CHAPTER XII.

Review of the situation—McClellan succeeds Scott in command of all the armies—Their condition; general disorganization; no plan for the war—McClellan's plans for the whole war—Simultaneous movements throughout the country—Orders to Burnside for North Carolina expedition; to Halleck and Buell for operations in the West; to Butler for the New Orleans expedition—Halleck and Grant—Correspondence of McClellan and Grant.

I DO not know that any one worthy of attention has questioned the manner in which was performed the task of converting the unorganized, defeated, and dispirited remains of McDowell's Bull Run command into the Army of the Potomac—an army which so long bore on its bayonets the life and honor of the nation.

Everything was to be done. An army was to be created *ab initio*—out of nothing. Raw material there was, but it was completely raw, and was to be fashioned into shape. Private soldiers, non-commissioned officers, officers, regiments, brigades, divisions, army corps, armies, with all their staff corps, were to be organized and instructed, not merely on paper, but in effective reality.

Small arms, field-guns, siege and garrison artillery, ammunition, equipments, camp-equipage, bridges, ambulances, baggage and supply trains, tents, clothing—all these wonderful instruments and *impedimenta* of a modern army were to be fabricated; and not only fabricated, but so made that it would be possible to use them; so strong as to withstand a heavy strain, so light that they could be handled. It added to the difficulty of the task that no army approaching in magnitude that now required had ever existed on this continent, so that our own experience was not of much avail in the crisis so suddenly upon us.

In fact, one of the greatest obstacles I encountered at this time was the difficulty of drawing some of the heads of departments out of the old ruts, and convincing them that what was eminently appropriate for five or ten thousand men was often

an absurdity or impossibility for ten or twenty times those numbers. Besides all this—and going on *pari passu* with it all—was the irresistible and pressing necessity of so fortifying Washington as to provide for its immediate and future safety; so that the active army of operations should not necessarily be tied down to it as its base of operations and be unable to uncover it without endangering its security.

More yet than this, the work was to be done in the face of a victorious enemy, whose outposts were within rifle-shot of our own and in sight of the capital; the only communications of the army and the government passing, as far as to the Susquehanna, through a people of very doubtful loyalty.

Moreover, the government was utterly ignorant of military affairs and incapable of judging the necessities of the situation; too often actuated by mere motives of partisan expediency instead of patriotic resolve. The people, also, were ignorant of war, and sure to be urged to clamorous and senseless impatience by a partisan press.

Finally, I was not only unsupported, but sometimes thwarted by Gen. Scott, whose views often differed from my own. Under these circumstances I had only my own unwavering sense of right to sustain me. In spite of all threats and clamors I quietly persevered in the course I knew to be necessary for the safety of the nation, regardless of the result to my personal fortunes.

The work was accomplished, and I know of no case in history where so great a task was so thoroughly performed in so brief a period.

It certainly was not till late in Nov., 1861, that the Army of the Potomac was in any condition to move, nor even then were they capable of assaulting entrenched positions. By that time the roads had ceased to be practicable for the movement of armies, and the experience of subsequent years proved that no large operations could be advantageously conducted in that region during the winter season.

Any success gained at that time in front of Washington could not have been followed up, and a victory would have given us the barren possession of the field of battle, with a longer and more difficult line of supply during the rest of the winter. If the Army of the Potomac had been in condition to move before

winter, such an operation would not have accorded with the general plan I had determined upon after succeeding Gen. Scott as general in command of the armies.

On Nov. 1, 1861, the following private letter was received from the President:

"Private.

**"EXECUTIVE MANSION,
Nov. 1, 1861.**

"Maj-Gen. Geo. B. McClellan :

"MY DEAR SIR: Lieut.-Gen. Scott having been, upon his own application, placed on the list of retired officers, with his advice, and the concurrence of the entire cabinet, I have designated you to command the whole army. You will, therefore, assume this enlarged duty at once, conferring with me so far as necessary.

"Yours truly,

"A. LINCOLN.

"P.S. For the present let Gen. Wool's command be excepted.

"A. L."

Immediately after succeeding Gen. Scott in the chief command of all the armies of the United States I arranged in my own mind the general plans for the operations of the ensuing year. I soon ascertained that more remained to be done in the West than in the East to bring the armies to a state of efficiency, and to that end did all in my power during the autumn and winter.

Until my own sphere of command and responsibility was extended from the Army of the Potomac to all the armies, I supposed that some general plan of operations existed, but now learned that there was none such, and that utter disorganization and want of preparation pervaded the Western armies. I had supposed that they were nearly, if not quite, in condition to act, but found that I was mistaken.

Even if the Army of the Potomac had been in condition to undertake a campaign in the autumn of 1861, the backward state of affairs in the West would have made it unwise to do so; for on no sound military principle could it be regarded as proper to operate on one line alone while all was quiescent on the others, as such a course would have enabled the enemy to concentrate everything on the one active army. Again, if, within a week or two of the first Bull Run, it had been possible to advance and defeat the Confederate army at Manassas, the moral effect might

have justified the attempt, even were it impossible to follow up the victory; but after the lapse of some months it would have been foolish to advance unless prepared to follow up a victory and enter upon a campaign productive of definite results.

Early in Sept., 1861, Gens. W. T. Sherman and G. H. Thomas had been taken from my command and ordered to report to Gen. Robert Anderson, just placed in command of Kentucky. Before many weeks Anderson was relieved, in consequence of failing health, and Sherman succeeded to his duties.

In October he became very much depressed and took an exceedingly gloomy view of the situation. He called for 200,000 men—a force entirely out of the power of the government to supply at that time. On the 2d of Nov. he requested me to order Halleck, Buell, Stevens, and some officers of experience to Kentucky, stating that the importance of his department was beyond all estimate.

On the 3d, after giving in detail the position of the troops, about 25,000, he says: "Our forces are too small to do good and too large to sacrifice."

On the 4th he telegraphed to me: "The publication of Adj.-Gen. Thomas's report impairs my influence. I insist upon being relieved to your army, my old brigade. Please answer."

On the 6th he telegraphed me: "... If Simon Buckner crosses Green river by the practicable fords, of which there are many at wide marks, may get in McCook's rear. Look at map between camp and Louisville. Two roads, one by Bardstown and other by mouth of Salt river. The great danger is in stripping Ohio and Indiana of troops and putting them on this side with no retreat. The enemy also threatens the lower river at Owensboro, where I have nothing but unorganized volunteers."

I have not a copy of the telegram, but my memory is clear that he also asked permission to fall back across the Ohio to prevent being cut off.

I knew the condition of affairs well enough to be satisfied not only that there was no danger that the enemy would cross the Ohio river, but also that, if he were mad enough to do so, he would never get back, and believed that the State could be held with the troops then in it. Therefore I gladly and promptly acquiesced in Sherman's request to be relieved, and sent Buell

to replace him, ordering Sherman to report to Halleck for duty. On Buell's arrival he found a complete state of disorganization ; not only so, but that nothing was being done to mend the matter, and no steps being taken to prepare the troops for the field. A total lack of system prevailed, and everything was allowed to run on as best it could. The new commander at once made himself felt, and justified the propriety of his appointment by the skill and energy with which he devoted himself to the task of bringing order and efficiency out of chaos and helplessness. Buell found no difficulty in holding his own in Kentucky, and drove the enemy out of Kentucky and out of the capital of Tennessee as soon as he had received and organized the reinforcements, which were provided as rapidly as possible, and which Sherman would have received in due course ; and, having accomplished the first part of his task, still found means to rescue Grant and Sherman from defeat at Shiloh with the army he had so recently created.

In my letters of instruction to Gen. Buell, Nov. 7 and 12, 1861 (hereafter given), I advised his remaining on the defensive for the moment, on the direct line to Nashville, and that he should throw the mass of his forces, by rapid marches *via* Cumberland Gap or Walker's Gap, on Knoxville, in order to occupy the railroad at that point to prevent its use by the Confederates, and to rally to us the loyal citizens of that region. Buell found it impossible to carry out these instructions, on account of the unprepared condition of the troops, the state of the roads, and lack of means of transportation.

About the same time I sent Halleck to Missouri to relieve Gen. Fremont in the command of that department. I instructed him to fortify and garrison some important points in the interior, and to concentrate the mass of his troops on or near the Mississippi for such ulterior operations as might prove necessary.

I determined to expedite the preparations of the Western armies as much as possible during the winter, and as early as practicable in the spring throw them forward ; commencing their advance so much earlier than that of the Army of the Potomac as to engage all the Confederate Western forces on their own ground, and thus prevent them from reinforcing their army in front of Richmond.

As early as the beginning of Dec., 1861, I had determined not

to follow the line of operations leading by land from Washington to Richmond, but to conduct a sufficient force by water to Urbana, and thence by a rapid march to West Point, hoping thus to cut off the garrison of Yorktown and all the Confederates in the Peninsula; then, using the James river as a line of supply, to move the entire Army of the Potomac across that river to the rear of Richmond.

In pursuance of this plan I did not propose disturbing the Confederate forces at Manassas and Centreville, but, while steadily pushing forward the fortifications of Washington and the instruction and organization of the Army of the Potomac, I desired to hold them there to the last moment, and especially until the Urbana movement was well in process of execution.

There was no possible military reason for disturbing them, and it best answered my purposes to keep them where they were. I was not apprehensive of any attack by them after the first few weeks. Their presence served to keep my men on the *qui vive*. The skirmishes which necessarily occurred gave experience of fire and taught watchfulness. They covered no ground in front of Richmond furnishing supplies needed by either party. They had the longest and most difficult line of supply that they could have.

Early in December this plan was so far matured that, finding Secretary Chase seriously troubled in his financial operations by the uncertainty as to military operations, I went one day to his private office in the Treasury building and of my own volition confidentially laid my plans before him. He was delighted, said it was a most brilliant conception, and thanked me most cordially for the confidence I had thus reposed in him.

Meanwhile the preparations for operations on the lower Atlantic and Gulf coasts were progressing slowly but satisfactorily. Early in January Gen. Burnside received his final instructions for the expedition to the coast of North Carolina. The general purposes of this expedition were to control the navigation of the sounds on the North Carolina coast, thus cutting off the supplies of Norfolk by water, and at the same time covering the left flank of the main army when operating against Richmond by the line of James river, the reduction of New Berne, Beaufort, and Wilmington, which would give us the double advantage of preventing blockade-running at those points and of enabling us

to threaten or attack the railways near the coast, upon which Richmond largely depended for supplies. All of these objects were promptly accomplished except the capture of Wilmington. Had I remained in chief command I should have proceeded to its capture as soon as practicable after the fall of Fort Macon, which took place April 26, 1862.

Towards the end of Feb., 1862, I also gave Gen. Butler his final instructions for the capture of New Orleans. This was accomplished, chiefly by the gallant action of the naval forces, about the 1st of May. Gen. Butler was ordered to secure all the approaches to New Orleans and open his communications with the column coming down the Mississippi. This being accomplished, Mobile, Pensacola, Galveston, etc., were to be attacked and occupied in turn.

About the middle of February I instructed Gen. T. W. Sherman to undertake the siege of Fort Pulaski and to occupy Fernandina, also directing him to study the problem of the reduction of Charleston and its defences.

By means of these various expeditions, carried out to their legitimate consequences, I hoped, without the employment of any very large land force, to occupy the important harbors on the coast, in order to reduce blockade-running to a minimum, and thus essentially cut off the very valuable assistance the Confederates, in return for their cotton, received from abroad in the way of arms, ammunition, clothing, and other necessary supplies which their own country produced either not at all or in wholly insufficient quantities. In addition to this most vital purpose, the possession of these important points on the coast would enable us to interfere seriously with the use of all railroads near the sea, give us new bases of operation from which either to make independent expeditions inland or to furnish new and short lines of supply to any main army moving parallel with the coast, while at the same time considerable numbers of the Confederate forces were occupied in watching them.

The following letters, and a subsequent paper addressed to the Secretary of War, sufficiently indicate the nature of those combinations :

TO THE SECRETARY OF WAR

HEADQUARTERS, ARMY OF THE POTOMAC,
WASHINGTON, Sept. 6, 1861.

SIR: I have the honor to suggest the following proposition, with the request that the necessary authority be at once given me to carry it out: To organize a force of two brigades of five regiments each, of New England men, for the general service, but particularly adapted to coast service; the officers and men to be sufficiently conversant with boat-service to manage steamers, sailing-vessels, launches, barges, surf-boats, floating batteries, etc. To charter or buy for the command a sufficient number of propellers or tug-boats for transportation of men and supplies, the machinery of which should be amply protected by timber; the vessels to have permanent, experienced officers from the merchant service, but to be manned by details from the command. A naval officer to be attached to the staff of the commanding officer. The flank companies of each regiment to be armed with Dahlgren boat-guns, and carbines with waterproof cartridges; the other companies to have such arms as I may hereafter designate; to be uniformed and equipped as the Rhode Island regiments are. Launches and floating batteries with timber parapets of sufficient capacity to land or bring into action the entire force.

The entire management and organization of the force to be under my control, and to form an integral part of the Army of the Potomac.

The immediate object of this force is for operations in the inlets of Chesapeake bay and the Potomac. By enabling me thus to land troops at points where they are needed, this force can also be used in conjunction with a naval force operating against points on the sea-coast. This coast division to be commanded by a general officer of my selection; the regiments to be organized as other land forces; the disbursements for vessels, etc., to be made by the proper department of the army upon the requisitions of the general commanding the division, with my approval.

I think the entire force can be organized in thirty days; and by no means the least of the advantages of this proposition is the fact that it will call into the service a class of men who would not otherwise enter the army.

You will immediately perceive that the object of this force is to follow along the coast and up the inlets and rivers the movements of the main army when it advances.

I am, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

G. B. McCLELLAN,
Maj.-Gen. Commanding.

Hon. SIMON CAMERON,
Secretary of War.

Owing chiefly to the difficulty in procuring the requisite vessels and adapting them to the special purposes contemplated, this expedition was not ready for service until Jan., 1862. Then in the chief command, I deemed it best to send it to North Carolina, with the design indicated in the following letter :

TO GEN. BURNSIDE.

HEADQUARTERS OF THE ARMY,
WASHINGTON, Jan. 7, 1862.

GENERAL : In accordance with verbal instructions heretofore given you, you will, after uniting with Flag-officer Goldsborough at Fort Monroe, proceed under his convoy to Hatteras inlet, where you will, in connection with him, take the most prompt measures for crossing the fleet over the Bulkhead into the waters of the sound. Under the accompanying general order constituting the Department of North Carolina, you will assume command of the garrison at Hatteras inlet, and make such dispositions in regard to that place as your ulterior operations may render necessary, always being careful to provide for the safety of that very important station in any contingency.

Your first point of attack will be Roanoke island and its dependencies. It is presumed that the navy can reduce the batteries on the marshes and cover the landing of your troops on the main island, by which, in connection with a rapid movement of the gunboats to the northern extremity as soon as the marsh-battery is reduced, may be hoped to capture the entire garrison of the place. Having occupied the island and its dependencies, you will at once proceed to the erection of the batteries and defences necessary to hold the position with a small force. Should the flag-officer require any assistance in seizing or holding the debouches of the canal from Norfolk, you will please afford it to him.

The commodore and yourself having completed your arrangements in regard to Roanoke island and the waters north of it, you will please at once make a descent on New Berne, having gained possession of which and the railroad passing through it, you will at once throw a sufficient force upon Beaufort and take the steps necessary to reduce Fort Macon and open that port. When you seize New Berne you will endeavor to seize the railroad as far west as Goldsborough, should circumstances favor such a movement. The temper of the people, the rebel force at hand, etc., will go far towards determining the question as to how far west the railroad can be safely occupied and held. Should circumstances render it advisable to seize and hold Raleigh, the main north and south line of railroad passing through Goldsborough should be so effectually destroyed for considerable distances north and south

of that point as to render it impossible for the rebels to use it to your disadvantage. A great point would be gained, in any event, by the effectual destruction of the Wilmington and Weldon Railroad.

I would advise great caution in moving so far into the interior as upon Raleigh. Having accomplished the objects mentioned, the next point of interest would probably be Wilmington, the reduction of which may require that additional means shall be afforded you. I would urge great caution in regard to proclamations. In no case would I go beyond a moderate joint proclamation with the naval commander, which should say as little as possible about politics or the negro; merely state that the true issue for which we are fighting is the preservation of the Union and upholding the laws of the general government, and stating that all who conduct themselves properly will, as far as possible, be protected in their persons and property.

You will please report your operations as often as an opportunity offers itself.

With my best wishes for your success, I am, etc., etc.,

GEO. B. MCCLELLAN,
Maj.-Gen. Commanding-in-Chief.

Brig.-Gen. A. E. BURNSIDE,
Commanding Expedition.

The following letters of instruction were sent to Gens. Halleck, Buell, Sherman, and Butler; and I also communicated verbally to these officers my views in full regarding the field of operations assigned to each, and gave them their instructions as much in detail as was necessary at that time:

TO GEN. HALLECK.

HEADQUARTERS OF THE ARMY,
WASHINGTON, D. C., Nov. 11, 1861.

GENERAL: In assigning you to the command of the Department of Missouri it is probably unnecessary for me to state that I have entrusted to you a duty which requires the utmost tact and decision.

You have not merely the ordinary duties of a military commander to perform, but the far more difficult task of reducing chaos to order, of changing probably the majority of the *personnel* of the staff of the department, and of reducing to a point of economy consistent with the interests and necessities of the State a system of reckless expenditure and fraud perhaps unheard of before in the history of the world.

You will find in your department many general and staff


officers holding illegal commissions and appointments not recognized or approved by the President or Secretary of War. You will please at once inform these gentlemen of the nullity of their appointment, and see that no pay or allowances are issued to them until such time as commissions may be authorized by the President or Secretary of War.

If any of them give the slightest trouble, you will at once arrest them and send them, under guard, out of the limits of your department, informing them that if they return they will be placed in close confinement. You will please examine into the legality of the organization of the troops serving in the department. When you find any illegal, unusual, or improper organizations, you will give to the officers and men an opportunity to enter the legal military establishment under general laws and orders from the War Department, reporting in full to these headquarters any officer or organization that may decline.

You will please cause competent and reliable staff officers to examine all existing contracts immediately, and suspend all payments upon them until you receive the report in each case. Where there is the slightest doubt as to the propriety of the contract you will be good enough to refer the matter, with full explanation, to these headquarters, stating in each case what would be a fair compensation for the services or materials rendered under the contract. Discontinue at once the reception of material or services under any doubtful contract. Arrest and bring to prompt trial all officers who have in any way violated their duty to the government. In regard to the political conduct of affairs, you will please labor to impress upon the inhabitants of Missouri and the adjacent States that we are fighting solely for the integrity of the Union, to uphold the power of our national government, and to restore to the nation the blessings of peace and good order.

With respect to military operations, it is probable, from the best information in my possession, that the interests of the government will be best served by fortifying and holding in considerable strength Rolla, Sedalia, and other interior points, keeping strong patrols constantly moving from the terminal stations, and concentrating the mass of the troops on or near the Mississippi, prepared for such ulterior operations as the public interests may demand.

I would be glad to have you make as soon as possible a personal inspection of all the important points in your department, and report the result to me. I cannot too strongly impress upon you the absolute necessity of keeping me constantly advised of the strength, condition, and location of your troops, together with all facts that will enable me to maintain that general direction of the armies of the United States which it is my purpose to exercise. I trust to you to maintain thorough organization, disci-



pline, and economy throughout your department. Please inform me as soon as possible of everything relating to the gunboats now in process of construction, as well as those completed.

The militia force authorized to be raised by the State of Missouri for its defence will be under your orders.

I am, general, etc., etc.,

GEORGE B. MCCLELLAN,
Maj.-Gen. Commanding U. S. A.

Maj.-Gen. H. W. HALLECK, U. S. A.,
Commanding Department of Missouri.

TO GEN. BUELL.

HEADQUARTERS OF THE ARMY,
WASHINGTON, Nov. 7, 1861.

GENERAL: In giving you instructions for your guidance in command of the Department of the Ohio I do not design to fetter you. I merely wish to express plainly the general ideas which occur to me in relation to the conduct of operations there. That portion of Kentucky west of the Cumberland river is by its position so closely related to the States of Illinois and Missouri that it has seemed best to attach it to the Department of Missouri. Your operations there, in Kentucky, will be confined to that portion of the State east of the Cumberland river. I trust I need not repeat to you that I regard the importance of the territory committed to your care as second only to that occupied by the army under my immediate command. It is absolutely necessary that we shall hold all the State of Kentucky; not only that, but that the majority of its inhabitants shall be warmly in favor of our cause, it being that which best subserves their interests. It is possible that the conduct of our political affairs in Kentucky is more important than that of our military operations. I certainly cannot overestimate the importance of the former. You will please constantly to bear in mind the precise issue for which we are fighting; that issue is the preservation of the Union and the restoration of the full authority of the general government over all portions of our territory. We shall most readily suppress this rebellion and restore the authority of the government by religiously respecting the constitutional rights of all. I know that I express the feelings and opinion of the President when I say that we are fighting only to preserve the integrity of the Union and the constitutional authority of the general government.

The inhabitants of Kentucky may rely upon it that their domestic institutions will in no manner be interfered with, and that they will receive at our hands every constitutional protection. I have only to repeat that you will in all respects carefully regard the local institutions of the region in which you

command, allowing nothing but the dictates of military necessity to cause you to depart from the spirit of these instructions.

So much in regard to political considerations. The military problem would be a simple one could it be entirely separated from political influences; such is not the case. Were the population among which you are to operate wholly or generally hostile, it is probable that Nashville should be your first and principal objective point. It so happens that a large majority of the inhabitants of Eastern Tennessee are in favor of the Union; it therefore seems proper that you should remain on the defensive on the line from Louisville to Nashville, while you throw the mass of your forces, by rapid marches by Cumberland Gap or Walker's Gap, on Knoxville, in order to occupy the railroad at that point, and thus enable the loyal citizens of Eastern Tennessee to rise, while you at the same time cut off the railway communication between Eastern Virginia and the Mississippi. It will be prudent to fortify the pass before leaving it in your rear.

Brig.-Gen. D. C. BUELL.

TO GEN. BUELL.

HEADQUARTERS OF THE ARMY,
WASHINGTON, Nov. 12, 1861.

GENERAL: Upon assuming command of the department I will be glad to have you make as soon as possible a careful report of the condition and situation of your troops, and of the military and political condition of your command. The main point to which I desire to call your attention is the necessity of entering Eastern Tennessee as soon as it can be done with reasonable chances of success, and I hope that you will, with the least possible delay, organize a column for that purpose, sufficiently guarding at the same time the main avenues by which the rebels may invade Kentucky. Our conversations on the subject of military operations have been so full, and my confidence in your judgment is so great, that I will not dwell further upon the subject, except to urge upon you the necessity of keeping me fully informed as to the state of affairs, both military and political, and your movements. In regard to political matters, bear in mind that we are fighting only to preserve the integrity of the Union and to uphold the power of the general government; as far as military necessity will permit, religiously respect the constitutional rights of all. Preserve the strictest discipline among the troops, and, while employing the utmost energy in military movements, be careful so to treat the unarmed inhabitants as to contract, not widen, the breach existing between us and the rebels.

I mean by this that it is the desire of the government to avoid unnecessary irritation by causeless arrests and persecution

of individuals. Where there is good reason to believe that persons are actually giving aid, comfort, or information to the enemy, it is, of course, necessary to arrest them; but I have always found that it is the tendency of subordinates to make vexatious arrests on mere suspicion. You will find it well to direct that no arrest shall be made except by your order or that of your generals, unless in extraordinary cases, always holding the party making the arrest responsible for the propriety of his course. It should be our constant aim to make it apparent to all that their property, their comfort, and their personal safety will be best preserved by adhering to the cause of the Union.

If the military suggestions I have made in this letter prove to have been founded on erroneous data, you are, of course, perfectly free to change the plans of operations.

Brig.-Gen. D. C. BUELL,

Commanding Department of the Ohio.

TO GEN. T. W. SHERMAN.

HEADQUARTERS OF THE ARMY,
WASHINGTON, Feb. 14, 1862.

GENERAL: Your despatches in regard to the occupation of Dafuskie island, etc., were received to-day. I saw also to-day, for the first time, your requisition for a siege-train for Savannah.

After giving the subject all the consideration in my power I am forced to the conclusion that, under present circumstances, the siege and capture of Savannah do not promise results commensurate with the sacrifices necessary. When I learned that it was possible for the gunboats to reach the Savannah river above Fort Pulaski, two operations suggested themselves to my mind as its immediate results:

First. The capture of Savannah by a *coup de main*, the result of an instantaneous advance and attack by the army and navy.

The time for this has passed, and your letter indicates that you are not accountable for the failure to seize the propitious moment, but that, on the contrary, you perceived its advantages.

Second. To isolate Fort Pulaski, cut off its supplies, and at least facilitate its reduction by a bombardment.

Although we have a long delay to deplore, the second course still remains open to us; and I strongly advise the close blockade of Pulaski, and its bombardment as soon as the 13-inch mortars and heavy guns reach you. I am confident you can thus reduce it. With Pulaski you gain all that is really essential: you obtain complete control of the harbor, you relieve the blockading fleet, and render the main body of your force disposable for other operations.

I do not consider the possession of Savannah worth a siege:

after Pulaski is in our hands. But the possession of Pulaski is of the first importance. The expedition to Fernandina is well, and I shall be glad to learn that it is ours.

But, after all, the greatest moral effect would be produced by the reduction of Charleston and its defences. There the rebellion had its birth; there the unnatural hatred of our government is most intense; there is the centre of the boasted power and courage of the rebels.

To gain Fort Sumter and hold Charleston is a task well worthy of our greatest efforts and considerable sacrifices. That is the problem I would be glad to have you study. Some time must elapse before we can be in all respects ready to accomplish that purpose. Fleets are *en route* and armies in motion which have certain preliminary objects to accomplish before we are ready to take Charleston in hand. But the time will before long arrive when I shall be prepared to make that movement. In the meantime it is my advice and wish that no attempt be made upon Savannah, unless it can be carried with certainty by a *coup de main*.

Please concentrate your attention and forces upon Pulaski and Fernandina. St. Augustine might as well be taken by way of an interlude while awaiting the preparations for Charleston. Success attends us everywhere at present.

Very truly yours,

GEO. B. McCLELLAN,

Maj.-Gen. Commanding.

Gen. T. W. SHERMAN,

Commanding at Port Royal, etc.

TO GEN. BUTLER.

HEADQUARTERS OF THE ARMY,
WASHINGTON, Feb. 23, 1862.

GENERAL: You are assigned to the command of the land forces destined to co-operate with the navy in the attacks upon New Orleans. You will use every means to keep your destination a profound secret, even from your staff officers, with the exception of your chief of staff and Lieut. Weitzell, of the engineers. The force at your disposal will consist of the first thirteen regiments named in your memorandum handed to me in person, the 21st Indiana, 4th Wisconsin, and 6th Michigan (old and good regiments from Baltimore).

The 21st Indiana, 4th Wisconsin, and 6th Michigan will await your orders at Fort Monroe.

Two companies of the 21st Indiana are well drilled as heavy artillery. The cavalry force already *en route* for Ship island will be sufficient for your purposes.

After full consultation with officers well acquainted with the

country in which it is proposed to operate, I have arrived at the conclusion that two (2) light batteries fully equipped, and one (1) without horses, will be all that are necessary.

This will make your force about 14,400 infantry, 275 cavalry, 580 artillery; total, 15,255 men. The commanding general of the Department of Key West is authorized to loan you, temporarily, two regiments, Fort Pickens can probably give you another, which will bring your force to nearly 18,000.

The object of your expedition is one of vital importance—the capture of New Orleans. The route selected is up the Mississippi river, and the first obstacle to be encountered (perhaps the only one) is in the resistance offered by Forts St. Philip and Jackson. It is expected that the navy can reduce these works; in that case you will, after their capture, leave a sufficient garrison in them to render them perfectly secure; and it is recommended that, on the upward passage, a few heavy guns and some troops be left at the pilot station (at the forks of the river) to cover a retreat in the event of a disaster. These troops and guns will, of course, be removed as soon as the forts are captured.

Should the navy fail to reduce the works you will land your forces and siege-train, and endeavor to breach the works, silence their fire, and carry them by assault.

The next resistance will be near the English Bend, where there are some earthen batteries. Here it may be necessary for you to land your troops and co-operate with the naval attack, although it is more than probable that the navy unassisted can accomplish the result. If these works are taken the city of New Orleans necessarily falls. In that event it will probably be best to occupy Algiers with the mass of your troops, also the eastern bank of the river above the city. It may be necessary to place some troops *in* the city to preserve order; but if there appears to be sufficient Union sentiment to control the city, it may be best for purposes of discipline to keep your men out of the city.

After obtaining possession of New Orleans it will be necessary to reduce all the works guarding its approaches from the east, and particularly to gain the Manchac pass.

Baton Rouge, Berwick bay, and Fort Livingston will next claim your attention.

A feint on Galveston may facilitate the objects we have in view. I need not call your attention to the necessity of gaining possession of all the rolling stock you can on the different railways, and of obtaining control of the roads themselves. The occupation of Baton Rouge by a combined naval and land force should be accomplished as soon as possible after you have gained New Orleans. Then endeavor to open your communication with the northern column by the Mississippi, always bearing in mind the necessity of occupying Jackson, Mississippi, as soon as you can safely do so, either after or before you have effected the

junction. Allow nothing to divert you from obtaining full possession of *all* the approaches to New Orleans. When that object is accomplished to its fullest extent it will be necessary to make a combined attack on Mobile, in order to gain possession of the harbor and works, as well as to control the railway terminus at the city. In regard to this I will send more detailed instructions as the operations of the northern column develop themselves.

I may briefly state that the general objects of the expedition are, *first*, the reduction of New Orleans and all its approaches; then Mobile and its defences; then Pensacola, Galveston, etc. It is probable that by the time New Orleans is reduced it will be in the power of the government to reinforce the land forces sufficiently to accomplish all these objects. In the meantime you will please give all the assistance in your power to the army and navy commanders in your vicinity, never losing sight of the fact that the great object to be achieved is the capture and firm retention of New Orleans.

I am, etc.,

GEO. B. McCLELLAN,
Maj.-Gen. Commanding U. S. Army.

Maj.-Gen. B. F. BUTLER,
U. S. Volunteers.

The plan indicated in the above letters comprehended in its scope the operations of all the armies of the Union, the Army of the Potomac as well. It was my intention, for reasons easy to be seen, that its various parts should be carried out simultaneously, or nearly so, and in co-operation along the whole line. If this plan was wise—and events have failed to prove that it was not—then it is unnecessary to defend any delay which would have enabled the Army of the Potomac to perform its share in the execution of the whole work.

The operations in the West began early in February, and soon resulted in the capture of Forts Henry and Donelson and the capture of Nashville. Shiloh took place on the 6th and 7th of April. It was not until May 21 that Corinth was evacuated.

I have already alluded to the very unsatisfactory condition in which Buell found his command, but he very soon satisfied himself that there was no apprehension of a dangerous offensive movement by the enemy, and steadily went to work to organize and discipline his troops. I gave him all the support and assistance in my power, sending him as much in the way of troops, arms, and supplies as the resources of the government and the

necessities of other points permitted. He displayed very high qualities as an organizer, and mastered the strategical questions with marked ability; and I am satisfied that one of the very best things I did when in command was sending him to Kentucky.

About the time he went there, and for some months thereafter, immense pressure was brought to bear upon the government to do something at once for the relief of the Union men in East Tennessee. I was fully impressed by the necessity for doing this, and constantly urged Buell to send a column to that region, even at the expense of remaining temporarily on the defensive in front of Bowling Green. But Buell found it impossible to do so, in consequence of the disorganization which prevailed, the lack of transportation and supplies, and the impracticable condition of the roads in the fall and winter. My confidence in Buell's judgment and knowledge of the circumstances was such that I reluctantly acquiesced. I still regret that it was impossible to carry out this intention, for the effect of the occupation of Knoxville at that time would have been of the first importance. But I have no doubt as to the propriety of Buell's decision. He was so true and loyal a soldier that no mere obstacles would have deterred him from carrying out my clearly expressed wishes. He was the best judge as to the possibility of the expedition, and I have no doubt that he was right. Before the close of November Buell and I discussed the propriety of a movement up the Cumberland and Tennessee rivers, and concluded that it should form a necessary part of the plan of offensive operations. This was so self-evident a proposition that I had long thought of it, but I am not sure whether the actual suggestion to carry it practically into effect came first from Buell or myself—very likely from Buell; certainly it did not originate with Halleck or any of his surroundings. I will for the moment leave this subject, simply stating that by the 26th of Feb. Nashville was in our hands, and by the 3d of March Columbus, Kentucky. In the course of these operations Halleck delivered himself of several prophetic statements in regard to "good strategy," each of which proved to be ridiculous.

On the morning of Sunday, March 2, 1862, desiring to give orders for the further movements of Buell's and Halleck's commands, I went to the military telegraph-office—then in the head-

quarters of the Army of the Potomac at the corner of Pennsylvania avenue and Jackson square—and caused communication to be cut off from all wires except those leading to Halleck's headquarters at St. Louis and Buell's at Nashville. I then called Buell and Halleck to their respective offices, and asked for a full report of the condition of affairs, number, position, and condition of their troops, that of the enemy, etc. Buell promptly gave me the information needed. Halleck replied the same day:

"... I have had no communication with Gen. Grant for more than a week. He left his command without my authority and went to Nashville. His army seems to be as much demoralized by the victory of Fort Donelson as was that of the Potomac by the defeat of Bull Run. It is hard to censure a successful general immediately after a victory, but I think he richly deserves it. I can get no returns, no reports, no information of any kind from him. Satisfied with his victory, he sits down and enjoys it without any regard to the future. I am worn out and tired with this neglect and inefficiency. C. F. Smith is almost the only officer equal to the emergency."

To this I replied:

Your despatch of last evening received. The success of our cause demands that proceedings such as Grant's should be at once checked. Generals must observe discipline as well as private soldiers. Do not hesitate to arrest him at once, if the good of the service requires it, and place C. F. Smith in command. You are at liberty to regard this as a positive order, if it will smooth your way. I appreciate the difficulties you have to encounter, and will be glad to relieve you from trouble as far as possible.

On the 4th Halleck telegraphed me:

"A rumor has just reached me that since the taking of Fort Donelson Grant has resumed his former bad habits. If so, it will account for his repeated neglect of my often-repeated orders. I do not deem it advisable to arrest him at present, but have placed Gen. Smith in command of the expedition up the Tennessee. I think Smith will restore order and discipline. . . ."

On the 6th Halleck telegraphed to Grant:

"Gen. McClellan directs that you report to me daily the num-

ber and position of the forces under your command. Your neglect of repeated orders to report the strength of your command has created great dissatisfaction and seriously interfered with military plans. Your going to Nashville without authority, and when your presence with your troops was of the greatest importance, was a matter of serious complaint at Washington, so much so that I was advised to arrest you on your return."

On the 31st of March Halleck informed Grant:

"Gen. McClellan directed me to place Gen. Smith in command of the expedition until you were ordered to join it."

On the 10th of March the adjutant-general of the army, by direction of the President, required from Halleck a report as to Grant's unauthorized visit to Nashville and as to his general conduct. On the 15th Halleck replied that Grant had gone to Nashville to communicate with Buell, that his motives were proper, and advised that no further proceedings be had in the case.

Now to the story which prompts me to insert these despatches. More than a year after the events in question Franklin wrote to me that on meeting Grant at Memphis, or some such point on the Mississippi, Grant asked what had made me hostile to him. Franklin replied that he knew that I was not hostile but very friendly to him. Grant then said that that could not be so, for, without any reason, I had ordered Halleck to relieve him from command and arrest him soon after Fort Donelson, and that Halleck had interfered to save him. I took no steps to undeceive Grant, trusting to time to elucidate the question.

In the latter part of 1866, while I was in Europe, Gen. Grant, through one of his staff, communicated with Gen. Marcy in regard to papers missing from the files of the office of general-in-chief during my tenure of the place.

In searching my papers Gen. Marcy found my retained copy of the despatch of March 2 from Halleck in which he reports Grant's unauthorized absence, etc. This he forwarded to Gen. Grant, who was thus for the first time informed of the truth. This despatch and my reply had, with many others, disappeared from the files in the office. So with regard to my correspondence as general-in-chief.

The military telegraph-office was first established by me, and was located, as already stated, in the headquarters of the Army

of the Potomac. While I was absent from Washington for a couple of days in March the Secretary of War, without any intimation to me, caused the entire office, with all the telegraphic records, to be removed to the War Department.

I was relieved from the general command of the army while with the front near Manassas (March 11), and never re-entered the office of commanding general in the War Department. All the papers there were taken possession of by the Secretary of War, and he and Halleck are alone responsible for any gaps in the files.

Some one abstracted the telegrams above alluded to. As to Halleck's conduct with regard to Grant, no comment by me is necessary. The facts speak for themselves.

[In this connection see "Personal Memoirs of U. S. Grant," vol. i. pp. 324-8; also, *North American Review*, Dec., 1885. The following correspondence between Gens. Grant and McClellan is appended by the editor:]

HOTEL BYRON, VILLENEUVE, Nov. 24, 1866.

Gen. U. S. Grant, Commanding U. S. Army:

GENERAL: In a letter received yesterday from Gen. Marcy he says: "I had a note yesterday from a member of Gen. Grant's staff, in which he says it has been officially reported to the general that he (McClellan) had retained in his possession certain records pertaining to the headquarters of the army which were loaned to him while preparing his report in 1862-3."

I desire to state that I have not knowingly retained or caused to be withheld any document whatever, whether important or unimportant, belonging to the headquarters of the army or to any other department of the government.

When my report was completed I caused all the original subordinate reports and all other documents belonging to the government to be boxed up, and sent them to the adjutant-general of the army in Washington, I think at the same time with my report. My recollection is that they were sent by the hands of my aide-de-camp, Capt. A. McClellan. I do not think it possible that any document can have been overlooked, because in examining my papers subsequently my attention would in all probability have been attracted to it, and, as a matter of course, I would at once have forwarded it to Washington. I shall be under especial obligations to you, general, if you will cause me to be informed what documents are alluded to in the report referred to, also by whom the report was made to you.

To such a general statement as that made to Gen. Marcy—

at least as it has reached me—I can only return a general reply, as I have already done.

Desiring the favor of an early reply, directed to the care of "Messrs. J. S. Morgan & Co., 22 Old Broad Street, London,"

I am, general, very truly yours,

GEO. B. McCLELLAN.

"HEADQUARTERS, ARMIES OF THE U. S.,

"WASHINGTON, D. C., Dec. 10, 1866.

"DEAR GENERAL: I have the honor to acknowledge receipt of your letter of the 24th of Nov. In reply I enclose you copies of all letters addressed to Gen. Marcy on the subject of papers supposed to be in your possession. These letters contain a full explanation to yours, and, as you will see, do not imply an intention on your part to withhold any paper properly belonging to the headquarters of the army.

"Trusting that this letter, with enclosures, will relieve you of any misapprehension you may have felt from Gen. Marcy's letter, and with the assurance that the general kindly offered to furnish anything we might want from papers retained in your possession, I remain, very truly yours,

"U. S. GRANT.

"To Gen. G. B. McCLELLAN."

VEVAY, SWITZERLAND,
Dec. 26, 1866.

MY DEAR GENERAL: Yours of the 10th inst. reached me yesterday, and I now fully understand what is wanted.

When called to the command of the United States armies in 1861 I left unchanged the organization of the Army of the Potomac and its headquarters, and in no manner merged them with those of the headquarters of the United States army—the staff for each being distinct, except with regard to my personal aides-de-camp. Thus Gen. Marcy, the chief of staff of the Army of the Potomac, had nothing to do with the headquarters of the army of the United States. Gen. S. Williams was adjutant-general of the Army of the Potomac, while Gen. L. Thomas was my adjutant-general in my capacity as commander of the United States army, etc. The papers and records of the two offices were entirely distinct. I had in the War Department building two rooms for my office as commanding general of the United States army, and thither Gen. Thomas brought to me all papers and matters requiring my action, received my orders thereon, carried back the papers to his own office, where they should be found, together with the orders and letters issued by him thereon in conformity with my instructions. You will the more readily comprehend the state of affairs when I remind you that my

predecessor, Gen. Scott, had an office—first in New York, afterwards in Washington—entirely distinct from that of the adjutant-general of the United States army, where he had his own adjutant-general and entirely distinct records; the adjutant-general of the United States army being then simply the adjutant-general of the Secretary of War. I changed the arrangement, dispensed with the machinery of a separate office, and merged all the routine service and records of the command-in-chief with those of the adjutant-general's office. The only papers, to the best of my recollection, kept in my office were the retained copies of my own letters on subjects of an important nature requiring more or less secrecy, such as letters of instruction in regard to military movements. As the telegraph was much used, these letters were not numerous. Col. A. V. Colburn had charge of these letters, and I am not sure whether they were copied into books or simply filed. I kept nothing for myself but the original rough drafts, either in my own handwriting or that of the aides to whom they were dictated. All written reports received went finally to the adjutant-general's office or that of the Secretary of War; none were retained in my office, which was, after all, simply a place for the transaction of business, and not a place of record. When I left Washington in March, 1862, to accompany the Army of the Potomac on its march towards Manassas, I was still the commanding general of the United States army, had no reason whatever to suppose that any change was contemplated by the President, left at a few hours' notice, and expected to return in a few days, preparatory to the final movement to the Peninsula. I therefore made no special arrangements in regard to my office in the War Department, and left everything as it happened to be, all my personal aides accompanying me. Two or three days after, while at Fairfax Court-House, I, to my complete surprise, received *through the newspapers* the orders relieving me from the command of the United States army, and never afterwards entered the office in Washington. I was informed that it was *immediately* taken possession of by the War Department for its own uses, and have no knowledge of what disposition was made of the papers, etc., found there, further than that it was about the same time stated to me that the War Department had taken possession of everything in the office, as the functions of commanding general were assumed by the secretary. All telegraphic despatches of any importance were sent and received in cipher, and were handed to me translated; the work of deciphering, and the reverse, being executed in the telegraph-office. My recollection is that the cipher copies, at least, were recorded in books, which were kept in the chief telegraph-office; these books were never in my personal possession. This chief office, originally organized under my direction, was in the building occupied as the headquarters of the Army of the Potomac.

on Pennsylvania avenue and Jackson square. Soon after the accession of the present Secretary of War to office, and during my absence from the city on duty for two or three days, the entire establishment, with all its records, apparatus, and *personnel*, was removed to the War Department building, without my knowledge, by order of the Secretary of War; and from that time I ceased to have the slightest control over it. When I returned to the city I found the removal accomplished, which was the first intimation I had of it. In that office should be found copies of all the messages that passed through it. With regard to the books containing the original duplicates of my messages sent, I have now no means of knowing what ones were left in my War Department office when it passed from my possession. I do not think there are any in my possession (among my papers in the United States) except that sent to you by Gen. Marcy. As that was simply my private memorandum, I would be glad to have it returned to Gen. Marcy when you have done with it. I was not aware that the telegrams of Feb. and March, 1862, from Gen. Halleck were among my papers. I have requested Gen. Marcy to forward to you whatever copies of telegrams, etc., he may find. From his letter to me I think that he has examined all my papers, for all that I know of are at Orange. I will do my best to aid him in making a thorough search. When I return to the United States—probably in the course of a few months—I will most cheerfully aid you, in any possible way, to carry out your wishes; but I am at present inclined to think that a close search in Washington will be productive of much better results than one conducted elsewhere.

I must apologize for inflicting so long a letter upon you, and am, my dear general,

Sincerely your friend,

GEO. B. McCLELLAN.

Gen. U. S. GRANT,
Commanding U. S. Armies.

CHAPTER XIII.

Evacuation of Manassas—Army corps—McClellan removed from chief command—President's military orders—Plan of advance on Richmond—Derangement of all plans by the administration.

THE organization of army corps directed by the President's order of March 8, 1862, was the work of the President and Secretary of War, probably urged by McDowell. It was issued without consulting me and against my judgment, for from the beginning it had been my intention to postpone the formation of army corps until service in the field had indicated what general officers were best fitted to exercise those most important commands. The mistakes of an incompetent division commander may be rectified, but those of a corps commander are likely to be fatal. The President designated the senior general officers to command the corps. The day after this order was issued we received information, that seemed reliable, of the evacuation of Manassas. The President and Secretary were with me at the time, and fully approved my determination of going to Porter's headquarters, where I could receive information more readily and be better prepared to act as circumstances might require, whether to move in pursuit or not. I at once sent Averill with a brigade of cavalry to verify the news, and do what he could against the enemy's rear-guard; but Gen. Johnston had, as usual, masked his retreat so well that nothing could be effected.

In the course of the evening I determined to move the whole army forward, partly with the hope that I might be able to take advantage of some accident and bring Johnston to battle under favorable circumstances, but also to break up the camps, give the troops a little experience in marching and bivouac before finally leaving the old base of supplies, to test the transportation arrangements and get rid of *impedimenta*, and thus prepare things for the movement to the Peninsula. It also seemed probable that this advance, in connection with the recent move on Harper's Ferry and Charleston, would tend to make Johnston

more uncertain as to my real intentions. In the course of the evening I telegraphed to the Secretary of War :

"In the arrangements for the advance of to-morrow it is impossible to carry into effect the arrangements for the formation of army corps. I am obliged to take groups as I find them, and to move them by divisions. I respectfully ask a suspension of the order directing it until the present movement be over."

To this the secretary made the following singular reply :

"I think it is the duty of every officer to obey the President's orders. Nor can I see any reason why you should not obey them in the present instance ; I must therefore decline to suspend them."

To this I at once replied at one A.M. :

"You have entirely misunderstood me, and the idea I intended to convey was simply that I could not, under the pressure of the new aspect of affairs, immediately carry out the President's order as to the formation of army corps. It is absolutely necessary that I should at once move divisions as they stand. If you require me to suspend movements until army corps can be formed, I will do so, but I regard it as a military necessity that the divisions should move to the front at once without waiting for the formation of army corps. If it is your order to wait until the corps can be formed, I will, of course, wait. I will comply with the President's order as soon as possible. I intended to do so to-morrow, but circumstances have changed. If you desire it I will at once countermand all the orders I have given for an advance until the formation of army corps is completed. I have only to add that the order I have given to-night to advance early in the morning was dictated solely by the present condition of affairs. If the leave to suspend the order be granted there will be no unreasonable delay in the formation of army corps. I await your reply here, that, if you so direct, I may countermand my orders at once. Please reply at once."

To this the secretary replied :

"I do not understand the President's order as restraining you from any military movement, by divisions or otherwise, that circumstances in your judgment may render expedient, and I certainly do not wish to delay or change any movement what-

ever that you have made or desire to make. I only wish to avoid giving any sanction to a suspension of a policy which the President has ordered to be pursued; but if you think that the terms of the order as it stands would operate to retard or in any way restrain movements that circumstances require to be made before the army corps are formed, I will assume the responsibility of suspending the order for that purpose, and authorize you to make any movement, by division or otherwise, to your own judgment, without stopping to form the army corps. My desire is that you should exercise every power that you think present circumstances require to be exercised without delay, but I want that you and I should not seem to be desirous of opposing any order of the President without necessity. I say, therefore, move just as you think best now, and let the other matter stand until it can be done without impeding movements."

To this I replied at 2.40 A.M.:

Your reply received. The troops are in motion. I thank you for your despatch: it relieves me much, and you will be convinced that I have not asked too much of you.

It was only by throwing the responsibility of delay upon the secretary that he withdrew his quite unnecessary opposition. My order for the formation of the corps was given on the 13th, as soon as circumstances permitted.

McDowell was very anxious to have the reserve artillery, the cavalry, and the regular infantry attached to his corps; fortunately, I kept them by themselves, or I should, no doubt, have lost them as well as McDowell's own corps.

On the 10th I reached Fairfax Court-House and established headquarters there. It was now evident, from the information received, that it would be impossible to reach the enemy within a reasonable distance from Washington. The various divisions were therefore halted where they stood, at convenient distances from headquarters, and the preparations pushed for embarking for the Peninsula. I threw forward Sumner with two divisions and Stoneman with a cavalry command to proceed as far as the Rapidan and Rappahannock, to secure the crossings and still further deceive the enemy as to my intentions.

While here I learned through the public newspapers that I was displaced in the command of the United States armies. It may be well to state that no one in authority had ever expressed

to me the slightest disapprobation of my action in that capacity, nor had I received any information of a purpose to change my position.

President's War Order, No. 3.

"EXECUTIVE MANSION, WASHINGTON,

March 11, 1862.

"Maj.-Gen. McClellan having personally taken the field at the head of the Army of the Potomac, until otherwise ordered he is relieved from the command of the other military departments, he retaining command of the Department of the Potomac.

"Ordered, further, That the departments now under the respective commands of Gens. Halleck and Hunter, together with so much of that under Gen. Buell as lies west of a north and south line indefinitely drawn through Knoxville, Tennessee, be consolidated and designated the Department of the Mississippi; and that, until otherwise ordered, Maj.-Gen. Halleck have command of said department.

"Ordered, also, That the country west of the Department of the Potomac and east of the Department of the Mississippi be a military department to be called the Mountain Department, and that the same be commanded by Maj.-Gen. Fremont.

"That all the commanders of departments, after the receipt of this order by them, respectively report severally and directly to the Secretary of War, and that prompt, full, and frequent reports will be expected of all and each of them.

"ABRAHAM LINCOLN."

The intelligence took me entirely by surprise, and the order proved to be one of the steps taken to tie my hands in order to secure the failure of the approaching campaign. Elsewhere I state the effect of this change in altering the condition of affairs, and breaking that unity of action which it was my purpose to enforce in the operations of the different armies in the field, as well as its effect upon operations in Virginia.

Though unaware of the President's intention to remove me from the position of general-in-chief, I cheerfully acceded to the disposition he saw fit to make of my services, and so informed him in a note on the 12th of March:

Unofficial.

FAIRFAX COURT-HOUSE,
March 12, 1862.

His Excellency A. Lincoln, President:

MY DEAR SIR: I have just seen Gov. Dennison, who has

detailed to me the conversation he held with you yesterday and to-day.

I beg to say that I cordially endorse all he has said to you in my behalf, and that I thank you most sincerely for the official confidence and kind personal feelings you entertain for me.

I believe I said to you some weeks since, in connection with some Western matters, that no feeling of self-interest or ambition should ever prevent me from devoting myself to your service. I am glad to have the opportunity to prove it, and you will find that, under present circumstances, I shall work just as cheerfully as before, and that no consideration of self will in any manner interfere with the discharge of my public duties. Again thanking you for the official and personal kindness you have so often evinced towards me,

I am, most sincerely your friend,

GEO. B. McCLELLAN.

While at Fairfax Court-House an order arrived assigning Gen. Wadsworth to the command of Washington. The secretary had spoken to me on the subject some days before, whereupon I objected to the selection for the reason that Gen. Wadsworth was not a soldier by training. I said that one of the very best soldiers in the army was necessary for the command of Washington, which was next in importance to the command of the Army of the Potomac—an officer fully posted in all the details of the profession; and that, much as I should dislike sparing him, I would give up Franklin for the place. The secretary replied that Wadsworth had been selected because it was necessary, for political reasons, to conciliate the agricultural interests of New York, and that it was useless to discuss the matter, because it would in no event be changed.

When Gen. Wadsworth parted from me at Fairfax he professed the greatest devotion and friendship for me, but at once became an enemy, probably because Stanton informed him of the objections I had made to his appointment, without giving him the real grounds of my opposition.

My memorandum of Aug. 2, 1861, shows that even then I regarded Virginia as the most important portion of the immense theatre of operations. Gen. Scott differed from me, and thought the valley of the Mississippi more vital. While fully recognizing the importance and necessity of operations in the valley of the Mississippi, Tennessee, and Cumberland rivers, and of coast expe-

ditions, I always held the eastern line to be the true theatre of decisive operations.

If I had been retained in chief command, untrammelled as to time and means, I should, in the early spring of 1862, have pushed with all energy the operations against Wilmington, Charleston, and New Orleans, as well as in the Mississippi, Tennessee, and Cumberland valleys, and against the Knoxville and Lynchburg Railroad, *via* Cumberland Gap, and early in May have thrown the Army of the Potomac to the James river with a strength of over 150,000 for duty. I intended to transport by water to Urbana, on the lower Rappahannock, four divisions of infantry with their batteries, the regular infantry, one bridge-train, a few squadrons of cavalry, and a small number of wagons; with them to push by a forced march to the vicinity of West Point, and then cross the Mattaponi and Pamunkey rivers, thus compelling the evacuation of Yorktown, and perhaps cutting off Magruder's force in the Peninsula. Meanwhile the reserve artillery, the remaining cavalry, bridge-trains, and necessary wagons were to be concentrated in the vicinity of Point Lookout, and, simultaneously with the landing at Urbana, ferried across the Potomac on North river ferry-boats, marched to the Rappahannock—the movement covered by an infantry force near Heathsville—then ferried over the Rappahannock and moved rapidly to unite with the force first landed. Prior to the evacuation of Yorktown the remaining portions of the army would have been landed at Urbana, and, subsequently to that, at West Point or on the James, as circumstances required.

As soon as the leading divisions of infantry crossed the Pamunkey they would have moved on Richmond, covered by cavalry on both flanks. My letters of Feb. 3 and March 19, 1862, to the Secretary of War, show that, under certain circumstances, I contemplated crossing the James river and attacking Richmond from the south.

The fears of the administration and their inability to comprehend the merits of the scheme, or else the determination that I should not succeed in the approaching campaign, induced them to prohibit me from carrying out the Urbana movement. They gave me the choice between the direct overland route *via* Manassas, and the route with Fort Monroe as a base. Of course I

selected the latter. My report gives all the most important correspondence on this subject, and the arguments I used in support of the plan of campaign which commended itself to my judgment.

Let me here call attention to the President's orders of Jan. 27 and Jan. 31, 1862, and his letter to me of Feb. 3, answered in mine of the same day to the Secretary of War :

President's General War Order, No. 1.

"EXECUTIVE MANSION,
WASHINGTON, Jan. 27, 1862.

"Ordered, That the 22d day of Feb., 1862, be the day for a general movement of the land and naval forces of the United States against the insurgent forces. That especially the army at and about Fortress Monroe, the Army of the Potomac, the Army of Western Virginia, the army near Munfordville, Kentucky, the army and flotilla at Cairo, and a naval force in the Gulf of Mexico be ready to move on that day.

"That all other forces, both land and naval, with their respective commanders, obey existing orders for the time, and be ready to obey additional orders when duly given.

"That the heads of departments, and especially the Secretaries of War and of the Navy, with all their subordinates, and the general-in-chief, with all other commanders and subordinates of land and naval forces, will severally be held to their strict and full responsibilities for prompt execution of this order.

"ABRAHAM LINCOLN."

The order of Jan. 31, 1862, was as follows :

President's Special War Order, No. 1.

"EXECUTIVE MANSION,
WASHINGTON, Jan. 31, 1862.

"Ordered, That all the disposable force of the Army of the Potomac, after providing safely for the defence of Washington, be formed into an expedition for the immediate object of seizing and occupying a point upon the railroad southwestward of what is known as Manassas Junction, all details to be in the discretion of the commander-in-chief, and the expedition to move before or on the 22d day of Feb. next.

"ABRAHAM LINCOLN."

I asked his excellency whether this order was to be regarded as final, or whether I could be permitted to submit in writing my

objections to his plan and my reasons for preferring my own. Permission was accorded, and I therefore prepared the letter to the Secretary of War which is given below.

Before this had been submitted to the President he addressed me the following note :

"EXECUTIVE MANSION,
"WASHINGTON, Feb. 3, 1862.

"MY DEAR SIR: You and I have distinct and different plans for a movement of the Army of the Potomac: yours to be done by the Chesapeake, up the Rappahannock to Urbana, and across land to the terminus of the railroad on the York river; mine to move directly to a point on the railroad southwest of Manassas.

"If you will give satisfactory answers to the following questions I shall gladly yield my plan to yours:

"1st. Does not your plan involve a greatly larger expenditure of *time* and *money* than mine?

"2d. Wherein is a victory *more certain* by your plan than mine?

"3d. Wherein is a victory *more valuable* by your plan than mine?

"4th. In fact, would it not be *less valuable* in this: that it would break no great line of the enemy's communications, while mine would?

"5th. In case of disaster would not a retreat be more difficult by your plan than mine?

"Yours truly,

"ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

"Maj.-Gen. McCLELLAN."

These questions were substantially answered by the following letter of the same date to the Secretary of War:

HEADQUARTERS OF THE ARMY,
WASHINGTON, Feb. 3, 1862.

SIR: I ask your indulgence for the following papers, rendered necessary by circumstances.

I assumed command of the troops in the vicinity of Washington on Saturday, July 27, 1861, six days after the battle of Bull Run.

I found no army to command—a mere collection of regiments cowering on the banks of the Potomac, some perfectly raw, others dispirited by the recent defeat.

Nothing of any consequence had been done to secure the southern approaches to the capital by means of defensive works; nothing whatever had been undertaken to defend the avenues to the city on the northern side of the Potomac.

The troops were not only undisciplined, undrilled, and dispirited; they were not even placed in military positions. The city was almost in a condition to have been taken by a dash of a regiment of cavalry.

Without one day's delay I undertook the difficult task assigned to me. That task the honorable secretary knows was given to me without solicitation or foreknowledge. How far I have accomplished it will best be shown by the past and the present.

The capital is secure against attack; the extensive fortifications erected by the labor of our troops enable a small garrison to hold it against a numerous army; the enemy have been held in check; the State of Maryland is securely in our possession, the detached counties of Virginia are again within the pale of our laws, and all apprehension of trouble in Delaware is at an end; the enemy are confined to the positions they occupied before the disaster of the 21st July. More than all this, I have now under my command a well-drilled and reliable army, to which the destinies of the country may be confidently committed. This army is young and untried in battle, but it is animated by the highest spirit and is capable of great deeds.

That so much has been accomplished and such an army created in so short a time from nothing will hereafter be regarded as one of the highest glories of the administration and the nation.

Many weeks—I may say many months—ago this Army of the Potomac was fully in condition to repel any attack; but there is a vast difference between that and the efficiency required to enable troops to attack successfully an army elated by victory and entrenched in a position long since selected, studied, and fortified.

In the earliest papers I submitted to the President I asked for an effective and movable force far exceeding the aggregate now on the banks of the Potomac. I have not the force I asked for.

Even when in a subordinate position I always looked beyond the operations of the Army of the Potomac. I was never satisfied in my own mind with a barren victory, but looked to combined and decisive operations.

When I was placed in command of the armies of the United States I immediately turned my attention to the whole field of operations, regarding the Army of the Potomac as only one, while the most important, of the masses under my command.

I confess that I did not then appreciate the total absence of a general plan which had before existed, nor did I know that utter disorganization and want of preparation pervaded the Western armies.

I took it for granted that they were nearly, if not quite, in

condition to move towards the fulfilment of my plans. I acknowledge that I made a great mistake.

I sent at once, with the approval of the executive, officers I considered competent to command in Kentucky and Missouri. Their instructions looked to prompt movements. I soon found that the labor of creation and organization had to be performed there; transportation, arms, clothing, artillery, discipline—all were wanting. These things required time to procure them.

The generals in command have done their work most creditably, but we are still delayed. I had hoped that a general advance could be made during the good weather of December; I was mistaken.

My wish was to gain possession of the Eastern Tennessee Railroad as a preliminary movement, then to follow it up immediately by an attack on Nashville and Richmond, as nearly at the same time as possible.

I have ever regarded our true policy as being that of fully preparing ourselves, and then seeking for the most decisive results. I do not wish to waste life in useless battles, but prefer to strike at the heart.

Two bases of operations seem to present themselves for the advance of the Army of the Potomac:

1st. That of Washington—its present position—involving a direct attack upon the entrenched positions of the enemy at Centreville, Manassas, etc., or else a movement to turn one or both flanks of those positions, or a combination of the two plans.

The relative force of the two armies will not justify an attack on both flanks; an attack on his left flank alone involves a long line of wagon communication, and cannot prevent him from collecting for the decisive battle all the detachments now on his extreme right and left.

Should we attack his right flank by the line of the Occoquan, and a crossing of the Potomac below that river and near his batteries, we could perhaps prevent the junction of the enemy's right with his centre (we might destroy the former); we would remove the obstructions to the navigation of the Potomac, reduce the length of wagon transportation by establishing new depots at the nearest points of the Potomac, and strike more directly his main railway communication.

The fords of the Occoquan below the mouth of the Bull Run are watched by the rebels; batteries are said to be placed on the heights in the rear (concealed by the woods), and the arrangement of his troops is such that he can oppose some considerable resistance to a passage of that stream. Information has just been received to the effect that the enemy are entrenching a line of heights extending from the vicinity of Sangster's (Union Mills) towards Evansport. Early in January Spriggs's ford was occu-

pied by General Rhodes with 3,600 men and eight (8) guns; there are strong reasons for believing that Davis's ford is occupied. These circumstances indicate or prove that the enemy anticipates the movement in question, and is prepared to resist it. Assuming for the present that this operation is determined upon, it may be well to examine briefly its probable progress. In the present state of affairs our column (for the movement of so large a force must be made in several columns, at least five or six) can reach the Accotink without danger; during the march thence to the Occoquan our right flank becomes exposed to an attack from Fairfax Station, Sangster's, and Union Mills. This danger must be met by occupying in some force either the two first-named places, or, better, the point of junction of the roads leading thence to the village of Occoquan; this occupation must be continued so long as we continue to draw supplies by the roads from this city, or until a battle is won.

The crossing of the Occoquan should be made at all the fords from Wolf's Run to the mouth, the points of crossing not being necessarily confined to the fords themselves. Should the enemy occupy this line in force we must, with what assistance the flotilla can afford, endeavor to force the passage near the mouth, thus forcing the enemy to abandon the whole line or be taken in flank himself.

Having gained the line of the Occoquan, it would be necessary to throw a column by the shortest route to Dumfries, partly to force the enemy to abandon his batteries on the Potomac, partly to cover our left flank against an attack from the direction of Acquia, and, lastly, to establish our communications with the river by the best roads, and thus give us new depots. The enemy would by this time have occupied the line of the Occoquan above Bull Run, holding Brentsville in force, and perhaps extending his lines somewhat further to the southwest.

Our next step would then be to prevent the enemy from crossing the Occoquan between Bull Run and Broad Run, to fall upon our right flank while moving on Brentsville. This might be effected by occupying Bacon Race church and the cross-roads near the mouth of Bull Run, or still more effectually by moving to the fords themselves and preventing him from debouching on our side.

These operations would possibly be resisted, and it would require some time to effect them, as, nearly at the same time as possible, we should gain the fords necessary to our purposes above Broad Run. Having secured our right flank, it would become necessary to carry Brentsville at any cost, for we could not leave it between the right flank and the main body. The final movement on the railroad must be determined by circumstances existing at the time.

This brief sketch brings out in bold relief the great advan-

tage possessed by the enemy in the strong central position he occupies, with roads diverging in every direction, and a strong line of defence enabling him to remain on the defensive, with a small force on one flank, while he concentrates everything on the other for a decisive action.

Should we place a portion of our force in front of Centre-ville, while the rest crosses the Occoquan, we commit the error of dividing our army by a very difficult obstacle, and by a distance too great to enable the two parts to support each other, should either be attacked by the masses of the enemy while the other is held in check.

I should perhaps have dwelt more decidedly on the fact that the force left near Sangster's must be allowed to remain somewhere on that side of the Occoquan until the decisive battle is over, so as to cover our retreat in the event of disaster, unless it should be decided to select and entrench a new base somewhere near Dumfries—a proceeding involving much time.

After the passage of the Occoquan by the main army this covering force could be drawn into a more central and less exposed position—say Brimstone Hill or nearer the Occoquan. In this latitude the weather will for a considerable period be very uncertain, and a movement commenced in force on roads in tolerably firm condition will be liable, almost certain, to be much delayed by rains and snow. It will, therefore, be next to impossible to surprise the enemy or take him at a disadvantage by rapid manœuvres. Our slow progress will enable him to divine our purposes and take his measures accordingly. The probability is, from the best information we possess, that the enemy has improved the roads leading to his lines of defence, while we have to work as we advance.

Bearing in mind what has been said, and the present unprecedented and impassable condition of the roads, it will be evident that no precise period can be fixed upon for the movement on this line. Nor can its duration be closely calculated; it seems certain that many weeks may elapse before it is possible to commence the march. Assuming the success of this operation, and the defeat of the enemy as certain, the question at once arises as to the importance of the results gained. I think these results would be confined to the possession of the field of battle, the evacuation of the line of the upper Potomac by the enemy, and the moral effect of the victory—important results, it is true, but not decisive of the war, nor securing the destruction of the enemy's main army, for he could fall back upon other positions and fight us again and again, should the condition of his troops permit. If he is in no condition to fight us again out of the range of the entrenchments at Richmond, we would find it a very difficult and tedious matter to follow him up there, for he would destroy his railroad bridges and otherwise impede our progress

through a region where the roads are as bad as they well can be, and we would probably find ourselves forced at last to change the whole theatre of war, or to seek a shorter land route to Richmond, with a smaller available force and at an expenditure of much more time, than were we to adopt the short line at once. We would also have forced the enemy to concentrate his forces and perfect his defensive measures at the very points where it is desirable to strike him when least prepared.

2d. The second base of operations available for the Army of the Potomac is that of the lower Chesapeake bay, which affords the shortest possible land route to Richmond and strikes directly at the heart of the enemy's power in the east.

The roads in that region are passable at all seasons of the year.

The country now alluded to is much more favorable for offensive operations than that in front of Washington (which is *very* unfavorable): much more level, more cleared land, the woods less dense, the soil more sandy, and the spring some two or three weeks earlier. A movement in force on that line obliges the enemy to abandon his entrenched position at Manassas, in order to hasten to cover Richmond and Norfolk. He *must* do this; for should he permit us to occupy Richmond his destruction can be averted only by entirely defeating us in a battle in which he must be the assailant. This movement, if successful, gives us the capital, the communications, the supplies of the rebels; Norfolk would fall; all the waters of the Chesapeake would be ours; all Virginia would be in our power, and the enemy forced to abandon Tennessee and North Carolina. The alternative presented to the enemy would be, to beat us in a position selected by ourselves, disperse, or pass beneath the Caudine Forks.

Should we be beaten in a battle we have a perfectly secure retreat down the Peninsula upon Fort Monroe, with our flanks perfectly covered by the fleet.

During the whole movement our left flank is covered by the water. Our right is secure, for the reason that the enemy is too distant to reach us in time; he can only oppose us in front. We bring our fleet into full play.

After a successful battle our position would be—Burnside forming our left; Norfolk held securely; our centre connecting Burnside with Buell, both by Raleigh and Lynchburg; Buell in Eastern Tennessee and North Alabama; Halleck at Nashville and Memphis.

The next movement would be to connect with Sherman on the left by reducing Wilmington and Charleston; to advance our centre into South Carolina and Georgia; to push Buell either towards Montgomery or to unite with the main army in Georgia; to throw Halleck southward to meet the naval expedition from New Orleans.

We should then be in a condition to reduce at our leisure all the Southern seaports ; to occupy all the avenues of communication ; to use the great outlet of the Mississippi ; to re-establish our government and arms in Arkansas, Louisiana, and Texas ; to force the slaves to labor for our subsistence instead of that of the rebels ; to bid defiance to all foreign interference. Such is the object I have ever had in view ; this is the general plan which I hope to accomplish.

For many long months I have labored to prepare the Army of the Potomac to play its part in the programme ; from the day when I was placed in command of all our armies I have exerted myself to place all the other armies in such a condition that they, too, could perform their allotted duties.

Should it be determined to operate from the lower Chesapeake, the point of landing which promises the most brilliant result is Urbana, on the lower Rappahannock. This point is easily reached by vessels of heavy draught ; it is neither occupied nor observed by the enemy ; it is but one march from West Point, the key of that region, and thence but two marches to Richmond. A rapid movement from Urbana would probably cut off Magruder in the Peninsula and enable us to occupy Richmond before it could be strongly reinforced. Should we fail in that we could, with the co-operation of the navy, cross the James and throw ourselves in rear of Richmond, thus forcing the enemy to come out and attack us, for his position would be untenable with us on the southern bank of the river.

Should circumstances render it not advisable to land at Urbana we can use Mobjack bay ; or, the worst coming to the worst, we can take Fort Monroe as a base and operate with complete security, although with less celerity and brilliancy of results, up the Peninsula.

To reach whatever point may be selected as a base, a large amount of cheap water transportation must be collected, consisting mainly of canal-boats, barges, wood-boats, schooners, etc., towed by small steamers, all of a very different character from those required for all previous expeditions. This can certainly be accomplished within thirty days from the time the order is given. I propose, as the best possible plan that can, in my judgment, be adopted, to select Urbana as a landing-place for the first detachments ; to transport by water four divisions of infantry with their batteries, the regular infantry, a few wagons, one bridge-train, and a few squadrons of cavalry, making the vicinity of Hooker's position the place of embarkation for as many as possible ; to move the regular cavalry and reserve artillery, the remaining bridge-trains and wagons, to a point somewhere near Cape Lookout, then ferry them over the river by means of North river ferry-boats, march them over to the Rappahannock (covering the movement by an infantry force near Heathsville), and

to cross the Rappahannock in a similar way. The expense and difficulty of the movement will then be very much diminished (a saving of transportation of about 10,000 horses) and the result none the less certain.

The concentration of the cavalry, etc., on the lower counties of Maryland can be effected without exciting suspicion, and the movement made without delay from that cause.

This movement, if adopted, will not at all expose the city of Washington to danger.

The total force to be thrown upon the new line would be, according to circumstances, from 110,000 to 140,000. I hope to use the latter number by bringing fresh troops into Washington and still leaving it quite safe. I fully realize that in all projects offered time will probably be the most valuable consideration. It is my decided opinion that, in that point of view, the second plan should be adopted. It is possible, nay, highly probable, that the weather and state of the roads may be such as to delay the direct movement from Washington, with its unsatisfactory results and great risks, far beyond the time required to complete the second plan. In the first case we can fix no definite time for an advance. The roads have gone from bad to worse. Nothing like their present condition was ever known here before; they are impassable at present. We are entirely at the mercy of the weather. It is by no means certain that we can beat them at Manassas. On the other line I regard success as certain by all the chances of war. We demoralize the enemy by forcing him to abandon his prepared position for one which we have chosen, in which all is in our favor, and where success must produce immense results.

My judgment, as a general, is clearly in favor of this project. Nothing is certain in war, but all the chances are in favor of this movement. So much am I in favor of the southern line of operations that I would prefer the move from Fortress Monroe as a base, as a certain though less brilliant movement than that from Urbana, to an attack upon Manassas.

I know that his excellency the President, you, and I all agree in our wishes; and that these wishes are, to bring this war to a close as promptly as the means in our possession will permit. I believe that the mass of the people have entire confidence in us—I am sure of it. Let us, then, look only to the great result to be accomplished, and disregard everything else.

I am, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

GEO. B. McCLELLAN,

Maj.-Gen. Commanding.

Hon. E. M. STANTON,
Secretary of War.

This letter must have produced some effect upon the mind of

the President, since the execution of his order was not required, although it was not revoked as formally as it had been issued. Many verbal conferences ensued, in which, among other things, it was determined to collect as many canal-boats as possible, with a view to employ them largely in the transportation of the army to the lower Chesapeake. The idea was at one time entertained by the President to use them in forming a bridge across the Potomac near Liverpool Point, in order to throw the army over at that point; but this was subsequently abandoned. It was also found by experience that it would require much time to prepare the canal-boats for use in transportation to the extent that had been anticipated.

Finally, on the 27th of Feb., 1862, the Secretary of War, by the authority of the President, instructed Mr. John Tucker, Assistant Secretary of War, to procure at once the necessary steamers and sailing craft to transport the Army of the Potomac to its new field of operations.

The following extract from the report of Mr. Tucker, dated April 5, will show the nature and progress of this well-executed service :

“I was called to Washington by telegraph, on 17th Jan. last, by Assistant Secretary of War Thomas A. Scott. I was informed that Maj.-Gen. McClellan wished to see me. From him I learned that he desired to know if transportation on smooth water could be obtained to move at one time, for a short distance, about 50,000 troops, 10,000 horses, 1,000 wagons, 13 batteries, and the usual equipment of such an army. He frankly stated to me that he had always supposed such a movement entirely feasible until two experienced quartermasters had recently reported it impracticable, in their judgment. A few days afterwards I reported to Gen. McClellan that I was entirely confident the transports could be commanded, and stated the mode by which his object could be accomplished. A week or two afterwards I had the honor of an interview with the President and Gen. McClellan, when the subject was further discussed, and especially as to the time required.

“I expressed the opinion that as the movement of the horses and wagons would have to be made chiefly by schooners and barges, that as each schooner would require to be properly fitted for the protection of the horses, and furnished with a supply of water and forage, and each transport for the troops provided with water, I did not deem it prudent to assume that such an

expedition could start within thirty days from the time the order was given.

"The President and Gen. McClellan both urgently stated the vast importance of an earlier movement. I replied that if favorable winds prevailed, and there was great despatch in loading, the time might be materially diminished.

"On the 14th Feb. you (Secretary of War) advertised for transports of various descriptions, inviting bids on the 27th Feb. I was informed that the proposed movement by water was decided upon. That evening the quartermaster-general was informed of the decision. Directions were given to secure the transportation; any assistance was tendered. He promptly detailed to this duty two most efficient assistants in his department. Col. Rufus Ingalls was stationed at Annapolis, where it was then proposed to embark the troops, and Capt. Henry C. Hodges was directed to meet me in Philadelphia to attend to chartering the vessels. With these arrangements I left Washington on the 28th Feb.

"I beg to hand herewith a statement, prepared by Capt. Hodges, of the vessels chartered, which exhibits the prices paid and parties from whom they were taken:

113 steamers, at an average price per day,	\$215 10
188 schooners, " " "	24 45
88 barges, " " "	14 27

"In thirty-seven days from the time I received the order in Washington (and most of it was accomplished in thirty days), these vessels transported from Perryville, Alexandria, and Washington to Fort Monroe (the place of departure having been changed, which caused delay) 121,500 men, 14,592 animals, 1,150 wagons, 44 batteries, 74 ambulances, besides pontoon bridges, telegraph materials, and the enormous quantity of equipage, etc., required for an army of such magnitude. The only loss of which I have heard is eight mules and nine barges, which latter went ashore in a gale within a few miles of Fort Monroe, the cargoes being saved. With this trifling exception not the slightest accident has occurred, to my knowledge.

"I respectfully, but confidently, submit that, for economy and celerity of movement, this expedition is without a parallel on record.

"JOHN TUCKER,
"Assistant Secretary of War."

The same order which confined my command to the Depart-

ment of the Potomac placed Buell under Halleck, and created the Mountain Department, extending from the western limits of the Department of the Potomac to the eastern boundary of Halleck's command.*

The Department of the Potomac then included all that part of Virginia east of the Alleghanies and north of the James river, with the exception of Fortress Monroe and the country within sixty miles thereof; also the District of Columbia and the States of Maryland, Delaware, Pennsylvania, and New Jersey. During the latter part of March, as I have already stated, Fortress Monroe and its dependencies were added to my command (but the order was countermanded on the 3d of April). Thus, when about to start for the Peninsula it was my duty to provide for the security of Washington and the Shenandoah Valley, and all operations in that region were under my direction.

It was very clear to me that the enemy did not abandon their positions on the Potomac and near Manassas without some good reason. I knew that they could not intend to return immediately, that they would never undertake the assault of the works around Washington, and that from the moment the operations by the lower Chesapeake were developed they would be tied down to the vicinity of Richmond so long as the Army of the Potomac remained anywhere near the James river. All they could attempt would be a raid in the Shenandoah. I therefore

* The following memoranda were found lying with the manuscript at this point :

MEMORANDA.—On the 5th of March there were no transports of importance at Annapolis, some at Perryville and Washington, and many engaged and fitting up in New York.

On March 12 there were at Alexandria transports for 15,000 infantry and one squadron, but they were not coaled or ready to receive the troops. The pontoon trains and engineers' tools were loaded up.

March 17 the leading division—Hamilton's—embarked.

March 20 there were eight to ten horse-transports at the wharves of Alexandria and as many more at anchor. Artillery-transports ready at the wharves.

March 21—Porter's artillery in Alexandria, but no sufficient accommodation for the horses and no arrangement of vessels for infantry and artillery.

March 22—Porter's division moved off in splendid style and well provided; reached Fortress Monroe on the 23d.

March 23—Only 150 horses fit for artillery in Alexandria depot; 300 expected next day.

March 24—Many new regiments arriving from the North. No additional transportation. Hunt and Averill can embark.

regarded a full garrison for Washington and 20,000 men for the Shenandoah as more than enough under existing circumstances.

The instructions I gave on the 16th of March were to the effect that Manassas Junction should be strongly entrenched, using the enemy's works as far as possible, and that Gen. Banks should put the mass of his forces there, with grand guards at Warrenton or Warrenton Junction, and, if possible, as far out as the Rappahannock; the country to be thoroughly scouted by cavalry, the railway from Washington to Manassas and thence to Strasburg to be at once repaired and put in running order, all the bridges to be protected by block-houses; as soon as the railway was in operation a brigade of infantry with two batteries to be strongly entrenched at or near the point where the railroad crosses the Shenandoah; Chester Gap to be also occupied by an infantry detachment well entrenched; two regiments of cavalry to be added to this brigade to scour the valley thoroughly. Under this arrangement the immediate approaches to Washington would be covered by a strong force well entrenched, and able to fall back upon the city if overpowered; while if the enemy advanced down the Shenandoah the force entrenched at Strasburg would be able to hold him in check until assistance could reach them by rail from Manassas. If these measures had been carried into effect Jackson's subsequent advance down the Shenandoah would have been impracticable; but, unfortunately, as soon as I started for the Peninsula this region was withdrawn from my command, and my instructions were wholly disregarded.

Again, with Manassas entrenched as I directed, Pope would have had a secure base of operations from which to manoeuvre, and the result of his campaign might have been very different. Certainly, if I had resumed command at Manassas instead of within the defences of Washington, Lee would not have ventured to cross the Potomac.

On the 1st of April, in view of what had occurred meanwhile, I temporarily changed the arrangements to the extent of leaving Banks in the Shenandoah. I placed Abercrombie in command at Warrenton and Manassas, under Banks's general orders, with 7,780 men at the former and 10,859 men at the latter place, and 18,000 men in Washington, so that if Abercrombie was obliged to

retire upon Washington there would be concentrated there 36,639 men, besides 1,350 on the lower Potomac and 35,467 under Banks in the Shenandoah.

In the event of an advance of the enemy in force in the Shenandoah Valley, Banks could have withdrawn to his aid at least 10,000 men from Abercrombie's command, or, in the reverse case, could have gone to the latter's assistance with at least 30,000 men, leaving his Strasburg entrenchments well guarded. Had I remained in command I would have seen to it that the entrenchments referred to were promptly executed.

To say that the force I left behind me was, under the circumstances of the case, insufficient is an untruth which proves either complete ignorance or wilful malevolence. The quality of the troops I left was amply good for the purposes in view.

The administration actually retained about 134,000 for the defence of Washington, leaving me but 85,000 for operations.

Gen. Wadsworth received clear instructions as to his duties. On the 4th of April the Valley of the Shenandoah was formed into a department under Gen. Banks, while the Department of the Rappahannock was constituted for McDowell. This department embraced "that portion of Virginia east of the Blue Ridge and west of the Potomac and the Fredericksburg and Richmond Railroad, including the District of Columbia and the country between the Potomac and the Patuxent."

Thus, instead of operating with an army of 156,000 men under my immediate command, with control of all the forces, supplies, and operations from the Atlantic to the Alleghanies and from the North Carolina line to New York, I was reduced to 85,000 men and a little strip of ground bounded on the west by the railroad from Fredericksburg to Richmond, on the south by the James from Richmond to the mouth of the Appomattox, on the east by a curved line running from the mouth of the Appomattox to a point on the Chickahominy between Long's and Bottom's bridges, thence to the White House on the Pamunkey, thence through King and Queen Court-House to a point on the Rappahannock about ten miles above Urbana, and thence to the mouth of the Potomac, the northern boundary being the Potomac from the mouth of Acquia creek downward. My bases of operations at Washington and Fortress Monroe were both removed from my control, and I remained simply with my 85,000

men, and not even the ground they occupied until I passed beyond White House.

Add to this consideration that I had now only too good reason to feel assured that the administration, and especially the Secretary of War, were inimical to me and did not desire my success, and some conception may be formed of the weight upon my mind at a time when whatever hopefulness and vigor I possessed were fully needed to overcome the difficulties in my path.

CHAPTER XIV.

Letters and despatches relating to subjects treated in the foregoing and following chapters.

HALLECK TO McCLELLAN.

"ST. LOUIS, March 10, 8 P.M.

"GEN. McCLELLAN: Reserves intended for Gen. Curtis will now be drawn in as rapidly as possible and sent to the Tennessee river. I purpose going there in a few days. That is now the great strategic line of the Western campaign, and I am surprised that Gen. Buell should hesitate to reinforce me. He was too late at Fort Donelson, as Gen. Hunter has been in Arkansas. I am obliged to make my calculations independent of both. Believe me, general, you make a serious mistake in having three independent commands in the West. There never will and never can be any co-operation at the critical moment; all military history proves it. You will regret your decision against me on this point. Your friendship for individuals has influenced your judgment. Be it so. I shall soon fight a great battle on the Tennessee river, unsupported it seems; but if successful it will settle the campaign in the West.

"H. W. HALLECK,
"Maj.-Gen."

By the time this reached me I was no longer the general-in-chief. It may suffice to say that I had never been intimate with Buell, and that my friendship for him grew out of my admiration for his excellent character and high soldierly qualities. I regarded him as a far better soldier than Halleck, and the subsequent course of events did not modify my views. If I had placed any one in command of all the operations in the West it would have been Buell and not Halleck. I could not then place Buell in that position, and was consequently obliged to do the best I could with a divided command.

BURNSIDE TO McCLELLAN.

Unofficial letter.

"ROANOKE ISLAND, March 5, 1862.

"MY DEAR MAC: My official report will be short to-day, as

nothing of importance has transpired since my last. It is due to me to say confidentially to you that we are waiting on the naval ammunition, our supplies having arrived some time since in sufficient quantities to move. I am embarking my men as fast as possible. All Reno's brigade is on board, half of Parke's, and half of Foster's; and I hope to get them all on board to-morrow, leaving Col. Hawkins, with three regiments, in command of the island. I hope to get off to-morrow night, and will move at once upon New Berne; but I am not sure of it, as we cannot calculate upon more than one good day in the week. But we are getting used to storms, so that we don't mind them. How we have escaped with so little loss of life is to me a miracle. I feel thankful enough.

"During our delay here I came very near moving upon [illegible], making my headquarters there, and rushing some columns up to burn the bridges on the Black Water, Nottoway, and Menheim, and then rush with my entire force upon Weldon and Gaston. But it is a risky move with my small force, and your orders are to go to New Berne. The same move can be made after we get New Berne (if we succeed), if you will send me men enough—say double the force. I feel sure that I can cut the enemy's communications at Weldon and Gaston with an additional force of even two regiments. In case you decide to send them you must not hesitate to send any division you like, as I am quite willing to serve under any other officer. You know, Mac., what I want, and that is peace and quietness at home. If I succeed in taking New Berne and Fort Macon I shall at once return to this place, unless otherwise ordered by you. I shall send off another mail very soon. If we move in the interior we will need more wagons—say 150—and teams. Please let me know fully as to your wishes, and I'll follow them out to the letter.

"It must be a great gratification to you to see all your plans in all parts of the army succeed. Hold on, old fellow, and don't let the politicians drive you. You know old Davy Crockett's saying: 'Be sure you're right, then go ahead.' . . . I have two parties out to burn the bridges over the Trent at New Berne and the Tar at Washington, the result of which I hoped to report by this mail, but the bad weather has doubtless delayed them.

"Your old friend,

"BURNSIDE."

SAME TO SAME.

Unofficial.

"NEW BERNE, March 15, 1862.

"MY DEAR MAC.: We've got New Berne, and I hope to have Fort Macon before long.

"I've followed your instructions to the letter, and have succeeded.

"You'll come out all right. You know my faith in you. Hope you'll soon wipe them out. . . . If I had 40,000 men like these I could do almost anything.

"Your old friend,

"BURNSIDE."

SAME TO SAME.

Unofficial.

"NEW BERNE, May 5, 1862.

"MY DEAR MAC.: We're now in a state of 'stand still.' Fort Macon has been reduced, and I am ordering Parke up to this place with his men. We have more sickness than I like to acknowledge; but we are improving, and are not weak now. If you want us to do anything within our strength we'll do it. Don't fail to command me. . . . When you start the rebels from Yorktown please let me know at once, and I'll give them a kick in the flank that will make them see stars.

"Stick to them, old fellow, and don't allow the politicians to get you into a controversy. You have acted wisely, and you'll come out all right. In God is our trust. Tell me what to do, and I'll try to do it. . . . You know as well as I that it is easier to turn a flank than force a front. God bless you!

"Your old friend,

"BURNSIDE."

MEMORANDA.

Supposing Burnside's force 15,000.

In event of movement on [illegible*], etc., would probably have to leave at least 5,000 in New Berne, 1,000 as railway guards, 1,000 Beaufort and Fort Macon, 500 Hatteras Inlet, 1,000 Roanoke—8,500 in all, leaving not over 6,000 or 6,500 for active operations; too small to do much good. While by operating on Goldsborough would have to leave, say, 1,000 at Roanoke, 500 Beaufort, 1,000 New Berne, leaving 12,500 available in the field.

I would therefore think that a cautious yet bold advance on Goldsborough as soon as transportation arrives would produce a better effect than anything else that can be done, and would have the effect to neutralize a large portion of the enemy's force.

G. B. McCLELLAN.

* The word resembles Wynton.

BARNARD TO McCLELLAN.

"WASHINGTON, March 19, 1862.

2.30 P.M.

"DEAR GENERAL: Fox didn't like the propeller plan; thinks the channel could not be effectually obstructed in that way. I told him you and I both objected to the other (landing plan), which I consider an exact parallel to the expedition of Hooker's to capture the Potomac batteries, and where he would have got captured himself; or, more truly, to the last plan, to make a campaign merely to take batteries as preliminary to a campaign. I just saw Stanton, and was most gratified by what he said. It was: 'Gen. McClellan has no firmer friend than myself; but I may not be where I am long.' 'I think Gen. McClellan ought not to move till he is *fully ready*.'

"I told him that the *Mystic* would be in Hampton Roads in ten days, and then we could certainly control the *Merrimac* and have a big steamer or two for Yorktown. He repeated: 'He ought not to put a man afloat till he is ready.'

"In great haste,

"J. G. BARNARD.

"Gen. McCLELLAN."

SAME TO SAME.

"STEAMSHIP *Minnesota*, 3 P.M.,

"Thursday, March 20, 1862.

"Gen. G. B. McClellan:

"DEAR GENERAL: Woodbury left day before yesterday. I wonder I did not hear of him yesterday in town. I had an interview with Gen. Wool this morning. He was very friendly, and said he would do everything; but it is a great drawback, this having two commanders. For instance, there are several bridges over Back river that ought to be rebuilt. General Wool said that he was going out to-day to direct one on the principal road to be rebuilt, but Houston told me that they expected Hamilton's division to do such things. Now, Hamilton is perfectly ignorant of localities, and his division in the confusion of arrival. If Wool's force is to co-operate it is a great misfortune that it can't be *ordered* what to do. That letter expressing readiness to do everything amounts to nothing. Houston is here getting information, but I have not had time to see what he has done.

"Now for Goldsborough. He is very much in favor of reinforcing Burnside and taking Norfolk from the Chowan and Currituck; but if this is not done his ideas are essentially coincident with yours—landing on Back bay or York river or the Poquosin, at the same time with an advance from here, carrying Yorktown, then marching on Richmond, and then taking Norfolk.

"He is opposed and pronounces impracticable the operation proposed by Fox on Sewell's Point, and also considers any operation on Norfolk from here impracticable while the *Merrimac* is extant. He says he is responsible to the country for keeping down the *Merrimac*, and has perfect confidence that he can do it, but cannot spare from here anything except the following:

"*Victoria*—two eight-inch guns and one thirty-two-pound Parrott;

"*Anacostia, Freeborn, Island Belle*—Potomac fleet;

"*Octoroon*—not yet arrived; Fox calls her a regular gunboat of four guns;

"*Currituck*—merchant steamer like the Potomac gunboats, I suppose;

"*Daylight*—merchant steamer like the Potomac gunboats, I suppose; and two regular gunboats—the *Chocorua*, not yet arrived, and the *Penobscot*, here—these two carrying each two eleven-inch guns.

"He says he can't furnish vessels to attack Yorktown simultaneously, but he thinks what you propose is easily done; that the vessels he mentions are fully adequate to cover a landing, and that, with a landing and an advance from here, Yorktown will fall.

"He recommends—and it may be a good idea—a landing in the Severn simultaneously, taking Gloucester in the rear, and from there battering Yorktown. Yorktown and Gloucester taken, the small gunboats, regular and irregular, will be enough to command the navigation of the York river. He thinks, and Gen. Wool thinks, that the whole attention of the enemy is concentrated on Norfolk; that they are reinforcing that place and increasing their batteries day and night, and that Magruder is not reinforced. Wool thinks that some troops passed over from north to south side of James river recently to reinforce Huger.

"This is all I can write now. I must stay a little longer to get some definite information about the places where we propose to land. There are 20,000 available men (nearly) here now (including Wool's, Mansfield's, etc.), and 20,000 men for the landing ought to be enough for the first operations. . . .

"Very truly yours,

"J. G. BARNARD."

BARNARD TO COLBURN, A. A. G.

"WASHINGTON, March 23, 10 P.M.

"Col. A. V. Colburn, A. A. G.:

"I have endeavored to get some plan arranged and means procured for the most important part of our enterprise—viz., a landing. The only means we have now are the bateaux. These

I had intended to go with Capt. Duane's command and with McDowell's corps. I learned to-day that the Annapolis bateaux had been ordered to Fortress Monroe. The trestles or the india-rubber or the canvas boats will answer for crossing the creeks, and all the bateaux should be with the landing corps—McDowell's. To-day I had a consultation with McDowell, and it was decided to place the whole matter of providing means of landing under Gen. Woodbury, and to put temporarily Capt. Duane under his command; to have the necessary scows, canal-boats, etc., prepared immediately; and the bateaux are to form an essential part of the means. The orders have been issued by Gen. McDowell for that purpose. Unless the arrangements are made now it is out of the question to think of landing any considerable force as a tactical or strategical operation. One company of Duane's command might go with the land forces to put down trestle-bridges—perhaps two companies; but he himself and all the bateaux should go with McDowell, and Woodbury will furnish the additional men necessary and see to the getting-up of arrangements. Answer as soon as possible.

"J. G. BARNARD."

SAME TO SAME.

"WASHINGTON, March 24, 1862.

"Col. A. V. Colburn, A. A. G. :

"The general's telegram received. Gen. Woodbury will go to headquarters to-day and concert matters so that there shall be no misunderstanding. The streams on the Peninsula are narrow where crossed by the road—forty to eighty feet wide—and the Newport News road requires no bridges. It is desirable to know—for the constant uncertainty about this has embarrassed us—whether Capt. Duane or any portion of his command is to leave before McDowell's corps; if so, how much of it, and when. Let me know when to join headquarters. . . .

"J. G. BARNARD,

"Brig.-Gen., etc."

MCCLELLAN TO FOX.

FAIRFAX COURT-HOUSE, March 12.

Hon. G. O. Fox, Assist. Sec. Navy :

Can I rely on the *Monitor* to keep the *Merrimac* in check, so that I can take Fortress Monroe as a base of operation?

G. B. McCLELLAN,
Maj.-Gen.

FOX TO McCLELLAN.

"WASHINGTON, March 13.

"Gen. McClellan :

"The *Monitor* is more than a match for the *Merrimac*, but she might be disabled in the next encounter. I cannot advise so great dependence to be placed upon her. Burnside and Goldsborough are very strong for the Chowan river route to Norfolk, and I brought up maps, explanations, etc. It turns everything, and is only twenty-seven miles to Norfolk by two good roads. Burnside will have New Berne this week. The *Merrimac* must go into dock for repairs. The *Monitor* may, and I think will, destroy the *Merrimac* in the next fight; but this is hope, not certainty.

"G. O. Fox,
"Assist. Sec. Navy.

"P. S.—In my opinion the *Merrimac* does not intend to pass by Fort Monroe. I am also of the opinion that we shall take her if she does so pass. I think the above is sure enough to make any movement upon.

"G. O. Fox,
"Assist. Sec. Navy."

WISE TO McCLELLAN.

"WASHINGTON, March 13.

"Gen. McClellan :

"In reply to your telegram I am clearly of opinion that the *Monitor* will be fully able to hold the *Merrimac* in check should she attempt to pass Fortress Monroe.

"H. A. WISE."

WOOL TO McCLELLAN.

"FORT MONROE, March 12.

"Gen. McClellan :

"It is thought the *Monitor* is a match for the *Merrimac*. The former has two guns, the latter eight. The *Monitor* is our chief dependence. If any accident should befall her Newport News would be taken, probably depending on the land force.

"It is said Magruder has from 15,000 to 18,000 men extending from James river to Yorktown. I have almost 12,500 effective troops, including the garrison of Fortress Monroe, and only about 110 regulars artillery. I do not believe the channel could be blocked between Sewell's Point and Craney island without

first taking Sewell's battery, consisting of from 25 to 30 guns, several of which are 10-inch.

"JOHN E. WOOL,
"Maj.-Gen."

HEINTZELMAN TO McCLELLAN.

"FORT LYON, March 13.
"Gen. McClellan :

"Allow me to recommend to you to have a complete survey made, by the engineers, of the enemy's works at Centreville and Manassas, with a memoir to meet the false statements that will be made to your prejudice.

"S. P. HEINTZELMAN,
"Brig.-Gen."

DENNISON TO McCLELLAN.

"WASHINGTON, March 14.
"Gen. McClellan :

"Have just left the President. He is very much gratified with your letter, and says my construction of the order as I gave it to you is exactly correct. You command the Army of the Potomac wherever it may go. Everything is right. Move quick as possible.

"W. DENNISON."

McCLELLAN TO MARCY.

FAIRFAX COURT-HOUSE,
March 13, 1.30 P.M.

Gen. Marcy :

Direct the barges at Perryville and Annapolis containing wagons to be ready to move at one hour's notice. Have the teams loaded up at the same place at once.

G. B. McCLELLAN.

SAME TO SAME.

FAIRFAX COURT-HOUSE,
March 13.

Gen. Marcy :

Prepare to embark Hunt's reserve artillery, together with all the reserve ammunition belonging to it. When will the transportation be ready?

G. B. McCLELLAN.

McCLELLAN TO TUCKER.

FAIRFAX COURT-HOUSE,
March 13, 10.30 P.M.

Hon. John Tucker, Assist. Sec. of War :

... What transports are certainly on hand at Alexandria and Washington for troops, horses, and guns, and how many of each kind? I cannot make my arrangements for details of movement until I know exactly what is on hand. It is absolutely necessary that I should be kept constantly informed. I wish to move so that the men can move directly on board ship.

G. B. McCLELLAN, *Maj.-Gen.*

McCLELLAN TO VAN VLIET.

FAIRFAX COURT-HOUSE,
March 13, 10.50 P.M.

Gen. Van Vliet :

Arrange to send to Fort Monroe at once the wagons and horses at Perryville and Annapolis. Send to same destination rations as promptly as practicable for my 140,000 men and forage for my 15,000 animals. See Shiras about the rations. A quartermaster should be sent to Fort Monroe to receive these stores and keep them separate. They should all be landed at once. Please inform me to-night what transports are on hand, and keep me informed as fast as they arrive. I will make it Col. Astor's business to keep the run of it, so that I may be constantly posted.

G. B. McCLELLAN.

McCLELLAN TO McDOWELL.

FAIRFAX COURT-HOUSE,
March 13, 11.30 P.M.

Maj.-Gen. McDowell, Washington :

Please make your arrangements to go to Fort Monroe very soon to receive troops, stores, etc. Try to complete your staff arrangements at once. I shall, of course, wish to see you before you go. I am perfectly willing that you should have Ingalls and Beckwith, merely remembering the special duty Ingalls is doing. See Heintzelman about Richardson. He will explain to the President.

G. B. McCLELLAN.

McCLELLAN TO STANTON.

HEADQUARTERS, ARMY OF THE POTOMAC,
March 16, 1862.

Hon. E. M. Stanton, Sec. of War :

SIR : In order to carry out the proposed object of this army

it has now become necessary that its commander should have the entire control of affairs around Fortress Monroe. I would respectfully suggest that the simplest method of effecting this would be to merge the Department of Virginia with that of the Potomac, the name of which might properly be changed to that of the Department of the Chesapeake. In carrying this into effect I would respectfully suggest that the present commander of the Department of Virginia be assigned to some other command.

Gen. Mansfield can take temporary charge of Fortress Monroe and its dependencies until the army arrive there.

I am, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

GEO. B. McCLELLAN.

MCCLELLAN TO HEINTZELMAN.

SEMINARY, March 28.

Brig.-Gen. Heintzelman, Fort Monroe :

Your telegram of yesterday morning received only last night. I hope the movement on Big Bethel was well considered in view of my wish not to prematurely develop our plan to the enemy. If the destruction of their batteries, and your subsequent return, confirms the idea that we are after Norfolk, all is well, except the mere fact of falling back. If this reaches you in time it would be well to hold the position of Big Bethel, if its occupation by the enemy can give us any trouble. You, on the ground, can best judge of this.

G. B. McCLELLAN,
Maj.-Gen. Commanding.

MCCLELLAN TO BLENKER.

"HEADQUARTERS, ARMY OF POTOMAC,
"STEAMER *Commodore*, March 29, 1862.

"Gen. L. Blenker, Warrenton Junction :

"The commanding general desires that you will hold your division in readiness to move at short notice to Alexandria for embarkation. It is his design to have your command join the active army the moment it can be spared from the service upon which it is now employed. He is anxious to afford your division an opportunity to meet the enemy, feeling well assured that it will prove itself conspicuous for valor on the battle-field and fully realize the high anticipations he had formed with respect to your command.

"S. WILLIAMS, A. A. G."

CHAPTER XV.

The Peninsular campaign—Landing at Fortress Monroe—That place removed from his command—Secretary Stanton stops all recruiting—Advance on Richmond—Columns under fire—First corps withdrawn from the army.

IN the course of description of the operations preliminary to the siege of Yorktown, attention is necessarily directed to the erroneous maps in our possession, and on which certain orders were based. This was but a single instance among many. In fact, it may be broadly stated that we had no military maps of any value. This was one of our greatest difficulties, and always seriously interfered with our movements in the early part of the war. When in presence of the enemy it was necessary to reconnoitre under fire, the accidents of the ground being entirely unknown to us.

It was a peculiar feature of our staff departments before the war that no measures were taken to collect topographical information about our own or any neighboring country. I do not know to what extent this has now been rectified, but there certainly should be some bureau charged with the collection and arrangement of topographical and statistical information in regard to our own and adjacent countries. It is true that the Confederates were no better off for correct maps than ourselves, but they possessed the inestimable advantage of operating on their own ground, which they knew perfectly well; they had plenty of good guides; and as they usually conducted a defensive campaign, they had plenty of time to construct maps and acquaint themselves thoroughly with the ground in the interests of active operations. Moreover, the white people, at least, were usually in their favor and acted as scouts, guides, and spies. Even when the negroes were favorable to us they seldom possessed the intelligence required to give any value to their information. They rarely knew more of the country than the plantations on which they had passed their lives, could give no accurate or intelligible description of roads or accidents of the ground, and their estimates of numbers were

almost always ridiculously inaccurate. If a negro were asked how many Confederates he had seen at a certain point his answer was very likely to be: "I dunno, massa, but I guess about a million."

I went on board the steamer *Commodore* on the afternoon of the 1st of April, off Alexandria, and remained at anchor until an early hour next morning, being engaged all night in giving the necessary orders for the conduct of affairs in front of Washington, the movements of troops, supplies, etc.

I reached Fort Monroe on the afternoon of the 2d, still under the delusion that I should have an active army of 146,000 and the full control of my base of operations, and that I should receive efficient support from the navy.

According to the best information in our possession in regard to the Peninsula, our main road extended from Fortress Monroe, through Hampton and Big Bethel, to Yorktown; while another existed from Newport News, nearly parallel with the James river, and passing through Warwick Court-House to the Halfway House, where it met the main road from Yorktown to Williamsburg. Both of these roads between Yorktown and the point of the Peninsula were intersected by many streams, and we had information to the effect that many of these crossings—as, for example, Big Bethel, Young's Mill, Howard's bridge, Cockletown, etc.—were strongly entrenched and would be obstinately defended.

Our information seemed also to be clear that the Warwick river ran alongside of the Newport News road, which crossed only an insignificant branch, and that it presented no obstacle to a march on the Halfway House in rear of Yorktown.

After the Fort Monroe movement was decided upon my first intention was to inaugurate the operation by despatching the 1st corps in mass to the Sand-Box, three or four miles south of Yorktown, in order to turn all the entrenched crossings referred to, and receive a base of supplies as near as possible to Yorktown; or else, should the condition of affairs at the moment render it desirable, to land it on the Gloucester side of the York river at the mouth of the Severn, and throw it upon West Point. But transports arrived so slowly, and the pressure of the administration for a movement was so strong and unreasonable, that I felt obliged to embark the troops by divisions as fast as trans-

ports arrived, and then determined to hold the first corps to the last, and land it as a unit whenever the state of affairs promised the best results. A few hours after I had determined to act upon this determination McDowell telegraphed me from Washington, suggesting that the troops should be embarked by divisions, according to convenience, instead of awaiting the arrival of sufficient transports to move his whole corps. Soon after this I was more than once informed that Gen. McDowell and others in Washington had instanced this decision to embark the troops by divisions as a proof that I had disobeyed the President's order as to the formation of army corps, and that I intended to throw obstacles in the way of its fulfilment.

Considerable delay occurred in the arrival of the sailing transports for horses, in consequence of an order being given, without my knowledge, for the steamers to come to Alexandria without them.

The first division which had embarked was Hamilton's, formerly Heintzelman's, of the 3d corps, which sailed on the 17th of March; it was followed by Gen. F. J. Porter's division of the same corps on the 22d of March. Gen. Heintzelman accompanied Porter's division, and was instructed to get his corps in condition for an advance without delay. He was also ordered to encamp his two divisions some three or four miles out from Fort Monroe, in good defensive position, and to push out strong reconnoissances to ascertain the position and the strength of the enemy, without going so far out as to destroy the impression that our movements might be intended against Norfolk.

On the 27th he sent Porter towards Big Bethel and Howard's bridge, and Smith towards Young's Mill, on the James river road.

Porter occupied Big Bethel and pushed one brigade four miles further, sending skirmishers on to Howard's bridge, where they saw entrenchments occupied. Deserters reported Magruder at the place with 800 men. Smith went as far as Watt's Creek, where he found no entrenchments, and gained information that the enemy held Young's Mill in strong force. Both divisions returned to their camps after completing the reconnoissance. Heintzelman reported that, from the best information, Magruder had from 15,000 to 20,000 men, and gave not the slightest indication that he thought he could take or invest Yorktown.

On the 3d of April there were of my command in the vicinity of Fort Monroe the 3d Penn. Cavalry, the 2d, 5th, and a part of the 1st U. S. Cavalry, a part of the reserve artillery, two divisions each of the 3d and 4th corps ready to move, one division of the 2d corps, Sykes's brigade of U. S. Infantry. Casey's division of the 4th corps was at Newport News, but totally unprovided with transportation. Richardson's division of the 2d corps and Hooker's of the 3d had not yet arrived. The troops ready to advance numbered about 53,000 men and 100 guns—less than 45,000 effectives. The amount of wagon-transportation arrived was altogether insufficient for a long movement, and it became necessary to advance in order to establish new depots on the shore more to the front. It was evident that to await any considerable accession of force and transportation would involve a delay of many days; I therefore determined to advance on the 4th of April.

The following telegram of April 3 to Mr. Stanton requires no explanation:

I expect to move from here to-morrow morning on Yorktown, where a force of some 15,000 of the rebels are in an entrenched position, and I think it quite probable they will attempt to resist us. No appearance of the *Merrimac* as yet. Commodore Goldsborough is quite confident he can sink her when she comes out.

Before I left Washington an order had been issued by the War Department placing Fort Monroe and its dependencies under my control, and authorizing me to draw from the troops under Gen. Wool a division of about 10,000 men, which was to be assigned to the 1st corps.

During the night of the 3d I received a telegram from the adjutant-general of the army stating that, by the President's order, I was deprived of all control over Gen. Wool and the troops under his command, and forbidden to detach any of his troops without his sanction.

This order left me without any base of operations under my own control.

On my arrival at Fortress Monroe I was informed that the enemy had been very active for some days past in crossing troops over the James river on the line of communication between Yorktown and Norfolk. Reports were conflicting as to the direction

of this movement, but in any event it seemed proper under the circumstances to move on Yorktown as promptly as possible with the troops in hand, in order to invest the place before further reinforcements and supplies could reach it.

On the same day, on the very eve of the advance of the Army of the Potomac into the enemy's country, with the certainty of heavy losses by battle and disease, was issued the order putting a complete stop to the recruiting service for the volunteers and breaking up all the recruiting stations :

General Order No. 33.

"ADJUTANT-GENERAL'S OFFICE, U. S. A.,
"WASHINGTON, April 3, 1862.

"III. The recruiting service for volunteers will be discontinued in every State from this date. The officers detached on the Volunteer Recruiting Service will join their regiments without delay, taking with them the parties and recruits at their respective stations.

"The superintendents of the Volunteer Recruiting Service will disband their parties and close their offices, after having taken the necessary steps to carry out these orders. The public property belonging to the Volunteer Recruiting Service will be sold to the best advantage possible, and the proceeds credited to the fund for collecting, drilling, and organizing volunteers.

"By order of the Secretary of War.

"L. THOMAS,
"Adj.-Gen. U. S. A."

Common sense and the experience of all wars prove that when an army takes the field every possible effort should be made at home to collect recruits and establish depots, whence the inevitable daily losses may be made good with instructed men as fast as they occur, so that the fighting force may be kept up to their normal strength. Failure to do this proves either a desire for the failure of the campaign or entire incompetence. Between the horns of this dilemma the friends of Mr. Stanton must take their choice.

During the preceding autumn I advocated a system of drafting, but was not listened to. Had it been adopted at that time, when recruiting was rapid and easy, it could have been established and well regulated without difficulty and without any shock to the country. The system as finally adopted was as bad as bad could be, and cannot be defended. It was unneces-

sary to disturb all the relations of society and the business interests of the country, and the numbers called out were absurdly large.

The numbers of troops on foot in April, 1862, in the various parts of the country, were ample for the suppression of the rebellion, if they had been properly handled and their numbers made good by a constant stream of recruits poured into the old regiments, so as to keep them always at their full strength. Instead of this, spasmodic calls for large numbers of men were made, and the general rule was to organize them into new regiments, often allowing the invaluable old regiments to die out. This system was infinitely more expensive, but gave the opportunity to promote personal or political favorites. The new regiments required a long time to make them serviceable, while the same men placed in the old regiments, under experienced officers and surrounded by veterans, would in a few days become efficient soldiers. Another grave defect of this system was the destructive effects on the *esprit de corps* of the old officers and men—an invaluable adjunct in war.

Out of these wholesale drafts grew the system of substitutes and bounties, which cost so many unnecessary millions to the country, and so seriously affected the quality of the troops in the latter years of the war.

Never in the whole history of nations was anything more absurdly and recklessly managed than the whole system of recruiting, drafting, and organization under the régime of Secretary Stanton. When his actions are coolly criticised, apart from the influence of party feeling, his administration will be regarded as unparalleled in history for blunders and ignorant self-assertion. He unnecessarily prolonged the war at least two years, and at least tripled its cost in blood and treasure.

The movement was made by the two roads already mentioned: the two divisions of the 4th corps from Newport News *via* Warwick Court-House; the two divisions of the 3d, supported by Sedgwick's division of the 2d corps, Sykes's brigade, and the reserve artillery, by the road from Hampton and Big Bethel to Yorktown. The advance on Big Bethel would turn the works at Young's Mill and open the way for the 4th corps; while, in turn, the advance of the latter corps on Warwick Court-House would turn the works at Howard's bridge and Ship Point,

and open the road of the right column to the immediate vicinity of Yorktown.

Smith's division (4th corps) encamped on the 4th of April at Young's Mill, with one brigade in advance on the road from Big Bethel to Warwick; Couch's division on Fisher's creek.

Porter, on the same day, occupied Cockletown with Morell's division and a battery, his pickets a mile in advance near Pavis's house; the other brigades of the division less than two miles in rear of Morell. Averill's cavalry found the Ship Point batteries abandoned. They were strong and well constructed, with deep wet ditches; they had platforms and magazine for siege-guns, all the guns withdrawn; there were excellent quarters for three regiments of ten companies each. Hamilton's division encamped about two miles in rear of Howard's creek. The reserve cavalry, artillery, and infantry bivouacked with headquarters at Big Bethel. Gen. Heintzelman learned during the evening that there were no batteries between Porter and Yorktown; that Yorktown was strongly fortified; that its garrison until recently consisted of 10,000 men, but was then increased to 20,000 or 25,000; that there were more troops at Williamsburg, and batteries about two miles south of it, and that reinforcements were said to have come from Richmond. Gen. Heintzelman concluded that the enemy had no idea of abandoning Yorktown. During the same afternoon Gen. Keyes, commanding the left column, received information that from 5,000 to 8,000 of the enemy were strongly entrenched at Lee's Mill. Still ignorant of the true course of the Warwick and of its relations to the entrenchments at Lee's Mill, and alive to the necessity of preventing further reinforcements to the garrison at Yorktown, I, on the evening of the 4th, ordered the movements for the 5th as follows:

Smith's division to move at six A.M. *via* Warwick Court-House to the Halfway House on the Yorktown and Williamsburg road; Couch's division to move at the same hour and close up on Smith at the Halfway House; any positions of the enemy met with on the way to be carried by assault without delay; on reaching the Halfway House the corps to occupy the narrow dividing ridge at that point, so as to prevent the escape or reinforcement of the garrison of Yorktown.

Porter's division to close up on its advanced guard at six A.M., and move forward to an intersection of roads about two

and three-quarter miles from Yorktown, there to halt and send out reconnoitring parties, to cover the reconnoissances of the engineer officers, etc.

Hamilton's division to move at the same hour and close up on Porter. Sedgwick, temporarily attached to headquarters, to move with the reserves to Dr. Pavis's house, where the road to Lee's Mill diverged, and there await orders.

If Heintzelman found it possible to assault the works at Yorktown immediately, the reserves were in position to support him; if he found an assault impracticable, and Keyes needed assistance in carrying out his orders, the reserves were in position to move at once to his support. If Keyes had succeeded in passing Lee's Mill and reaching the Halfway House, I should at once have gone to his support with all the reserves and one of Heintzelman's divisions, thus holding the key-point of the operation with four divisions of infantry, the brigade of regulars, the cavalry and artillery reserves.

In consequence of the heavy rains the roads were very bad and the troops moved with difficulty, so that little of Keyes's artillery and none of the ammunition, forage, and provision trains could be brought up. Heintzelman early in the day came under the artillery-fire of the works of Yorktown, and soon saw that an assault was impracticable. Keyes also found himself brought to a halt by the artillery-fire of the Lee's Mill works, and discovered that they were covered by the Warwick river, rendering any attempt at assault utterly out of the question.

It was at this moment, with the leading division of each column under a hot artillery-fire, and the skirmishers of the 3d corps engaged, being myself with Porter's division, that I received the telegram informing me of the withdrawal of the 1st corps (McDowell's) from my command:

"ADJUTANT-GENERAL'S OFFICE,
"April 4, 1862.

"Gen. McClellan:

"By directions of the President Gen. McDowell's army corps has been detached from the force under your immediate command, and the general is ordered to report to the Secretary of War; letter by mail.

"L. THOMAS,
"Adj.-Gen."

CHAPTER XVI.

Effects of reduction of the army—Overthrow of the campaign—New campaign with reduced army—Siege of Yorktown.

Soon after receiving the telegram I sent the following to the Secretary of War, dated April 5 :

The enemy are in large force along our front, and apparently intend making a determined resistance. A reconnoissance just made by Gen. Barnard shows that their line of works extends across the entire Peninsula from Yorktown to Warwick river. Many of them are formidable. Deserters say that they are being reinforced daily from Richmond and from Norfolk. Under the circumstances I beg that you will reconsider the order detaching the 1st corps from my command.

In my deliberate judgment the success of our cause will be imperilled by so greatly reducing my force when it is actually under the fire of the enemy and active operations have commenced. Two of my divisions have been under fire of artillery during most of the day. I am now of the opinion that I shall have to fight all the available force of the rebels not far from here. Do not force me to do so with diminished ranks ; but whatever your decision may be, I will leave nothing undone to obtain success.

If you cannot leave me the whole of the 1st corps, I urgently ask, as a military necessity, that I may not lose Franklin and his division.

On the same day, at ten P.M., I sent the following to Secretary Stanton :

Since Gen. Woodbury's brigade of volunteer engineer troops was only temporarily attached to the 1st corps for special service, and is much needed here, I have directed Gen. Woodbury to bring it here at once. Their services are indispensable.

The following letter was written during the evening of April 5 :

HEADQUARTERS, ARMY OF POTOMAC,
CAMP NEAR YORKTOWN, April 5, 1862.

Brig.-Gen. L. Thomas, Adj.-Gen. U. S. A. :

GENERAL : I have now a distinct knowledge of the general position of the enemy in my front. His left is in Yorktown ; his

line thence extends along and in rear of the Warwick river to its mouth. That stream is an obstacle of great magnitude. It is fordable at only one point (so far as I yet know) below its head, which is near Yorktown; is for several miles unfordable, and has generally a very marshy valley. His batteries and entrenchments render this line an exceedingly formidable one, entirely too much so (so far as I now understand it) to be carried by a simple assault. I shall employ to-morrow in reconnoissances, repairing roads, establishing a depot at Ship's Point, and in bringing up supplies.

Porter, the head of the right column, has moved as close upon the town as the enemy's guns will permit; he is encamped there, supported by Hamilton's division. Porter has been under fire all the afternoon. But five men killed. His rifled field-guns and sharpshooters have caused some loss to the enemy. Keyes, with two divisions, is in front of Lee's Mill; where the road from Newport News to Williamsburg crosses Warwick river. He has been engaged in an artillery combat of several hours' duration, losing some five killed. At Lee's Mill we have a causeway covered by formidable batteries. The information obtained at Fort Monroe in regard to the topography of the country and the position and strength of the enemy has been unreliable. He is in strong force and very strong position. If the reconnoissances of to-morrow verify the observations of to-day, we shall be obliged to use much heavy artillery before we can force their lines and isolate the garrison of Yorktown. I omitted to state that I hold the reserves in a central position until I can learn more of the condition of affairs. The present aspect of affairs renders it exceedingly unfortunate that the 1st corps has been detached from my command. It is no longer in my power to make a movement from the Severn river upon Gloucester and West Point. I am reduced to a front attack upon a very strong line. I still hope that the order detaching the 1st corps may be reconsidered. I do not feel that without it I have force sufficient to accomplish the objects I have proposed in this campaign with that certainty, rapidity, and completeness which I had hoped to obtain. The departments will, I trust, realize that more caution will be needed on my part after having been so unexpectedly deprived of so very large a portion of my force when actually having my troops under fire. I have frankly stated what I now consider to be the strength of the enemy's position; the reconnoissances of to-morrow may modify my opinion. Whatever the facts may be, I shall make the best use I can of the force at my disposal, determined to gain my point as completely and as rapidly as may be.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

GEO. B. McCLELLAN,
Maj.-Gen. Commanding.

P. S. All my movements up to this evening were predicated upon the expectation that no more troops would be detached from my command. I have involved my troops in actual conflict upon that supposition, and calculating upon the prompt arrival of the 1st corps as a part of the programme. It has just occurred to me to say that the maps of the Peninsula I sent to the President and secretary are perfectly unreliable; the roads are wrong, and the Warwick river crosses the Newport News and Williamsburg road some three miles above Warwick Court-House, which latter place is about one mile from the road.

GEO. B. McCLELLAN,
Maj.-Gen.

This, then, was the situation in which I found myself on the evening of April 5: Flag-Officer Goldsborough had informed me that it was not in his power to control the navigation of the James river so as to enable me to use it as a line of supply, or to cross it, or even to cover my left flank; nor could he, as he thought, furnish any vessels to attack the batteries of Yorktown and Gloucester, or to run by them in the dark and thus cut off the supplies of the enemy by water and control their land-communication. I was thus deprived of the co-operation of the navy and left to my own resources.

I had been deprived of five infantry divisions, and out of the four left to me there were present at the front five divisions of volunteer regiments, the weak brigade of regulars, Hunt's artillery reserve, and a small cavalry force.

Owing to the lack of wagons Casey did not reach Young's Mill until the 16th. Richardson's division reached the front on the same day. Hooker's division commenced arriving at Ship's Point on the 10th. The roads were so bad and wagons so few that it was with the utmost difficulty supplies could be brought up, and the field-artillery moved with great difficulty. Even the headquarters wagons could not get up, and I slept in a deserted hut with my saddle-blanket for a bed.

My telegram of April 7 to the President shows that only 53,000 men had joined me, so that I had not more than 44,000 effectives, and found myself in front of a position which apparently could not be carried by assault. The force was too small to attempt any movement to turn Gloucester without the assistance of the navy, and I was obliged to abandon the plan of rapid turning movements which I had intended to carry out.

All that could be done was to halt where we were, and by close reconnoissances ascertain whether there were any weak points which we could assault, or, failing in that, determine what could be effected with the aid of siege-artillery to cover the attack.

Next day, April 6, I sent the following telegram to his excellency the President :

The order forming new departments, if rigidly enforced, deprives me of the power of ordering up wagons and troops absolutely necessary to enable me to advance to Richmond. I have by no means the transportation I must have to move my army even a few miles. I respectfully request I may not be placed in this position, but that my orders for wagons, trains, and ammunition, and other material that I have prepared and necessarily left behind me, as well as Woodbury's brigade, may at once be complied with. The enemy is strong in my front, and I have a most serious task before me, in the fulfilment of which I need all the aid the government can give me. I again repeat the urgent request that Gen. Franklin and his division may be restored to my command.

I received the following reply from Secretary Stanton :

"The President directs me to say that your despatch to him has been received. Gen. Sumner's corps is on the road to you and will go forward as fast as possible. Franklin's division is now on the advance towards Manassas. There is no means of transportation here to send it forward in time to be of service in your present operations. Telegraph frequently, and all in the power of the government shall be done to sustain you as occasion may require."

And this from the President :

"Yours of eleven A.M. to-day received. Secretary of War informs me that the forwarding of transportation, ammunition, and Woodbury's brigade under your order has not and will not be interfered with. You now have over one hundred thousand troops with you, independent of Gen. Wool's command. I think you had better break the enemy's line from Yorktown to Warwick river at once. This will probably use time as advantageously as you can.

"A. LINCOLN,
"President."

To this I replied, April 7, to the President :

Your telegram of yesterday received. In reply I have the honor to state that my entire force for duty only amounts to about eighty-five thousand (85,000) men. Gen. Wool's command, as you will observe from the accompanying order, has been taken out of my control, although he has most cheerfully co-operated with me. The only use that can be made of his command is to protect my communications in rear of this point. At this time only fifty-three thousand (53,000) men have joined me, but they are coming up as rapidly as my means of transportation will permit. Please refer to my despatch to the Secretary of War of to-night for the details of our present situation.

I find on the back of my retained copy of this despatch the following memorandum made at the time by myself :

Return of March 31, 1862, shows men present for duty	171,602
Deduct 1st corps, infantry and artillery,	32,119
“ Blenker,	8,616
“ Banks,	21,739
“ Wadsworth,	19,318
“ Cavalry of 1st corps, etc.,	1,600
“ “ “ Blenker,	800
“ Van Alen and Wyndham,	1,600
	<hr/>
	85,792
	85,792
	<hr/>
	85,810

Officers, about 3,900.

Total absent from whole command, 23,796.

As this memorandum was a calculation to ascertain only the number of troops left under my command, it did not take into consideration all the troops left behind which did not compose parts of the total of 171,602 for duty. My letters of April 1 show that many more were left in addition to those mentioned in this memorandum.

The telegram referred to in my despatch to the President was the following, of April 7, to Secretary Stanton :

Your telegram of yesterday arrived here while I was absent examining the enemy's right, which I did pretty closely. . . . The whole line of the Warwick, which really heads within a mile of Yorktown, is strongly defended by detached redoubts and other fortifications, armed with heavy and light guns. The approaches, except at Yorktown, are covered by the Warwick, over which there is but one, or at most two, passages, both of

which are covered by strong batteries. It will be necessary to resort to the use of heavy guns and some siege operations before we assault. All the prisoners state that Gen. J. E. Johnston arrived at Yorktown yesterday with strong reinforcements. It seems clear that I shall have the whole force of the enemy on my hands—probably not less than (100,000) one hundred thousand men, and possibly more. In consequence of the loss of Blenker's division and the 1st corps my force is possibly less than that of the enemy, while they have all the advantage of position.

I am under great obligations to you for the offer that the whole force and material of the government will be as fully and as speedily under my command as heretofore, or as if the new departments had not been created.

Since my arrangements were made for this campaign at least (50,000) fifty thousand men have been taken from my command. Since my despatch of the 5th instant five divisions have been in close observation of the enemy, and frequently exchanging shots. When my present command all joins I shall have about (85,000) eighty-five thousand men for duty, from which a large force must be taken for guards, scouts, etc. With this army I could assault the enemy's works, and perhaps carry them. But were I in possession of their entrenchments, and assailed by double my numbers, I should have no fears as to the result.

Under the circumstances that have been developed since we arrived here, I feel fully impressed with the conviction that here is to be fought the great battle that is to decide the existing contest. I shall, of course, commence the attack as soon as I can get up my siege train, and shall do all in my power to carry the enemy's works; but to do this with a reasonable degree of certainty requires, in my judgment, that I should, if possible, have at least the whole of the 1st corps to land upon the Severn river and attack Gloucester in the rear.

My present strength will not admit of a detachment sufficient for this purpose without materially impairing the efficiency of this column. Flag-Officer Goldsborough thinks the works too strong for his available vessels unless I can turn Gloucester. I send by mail copies of his letter and one of the commander of the gunboats here.

Gen. Keyes, commanding 4th army corps, after the examination of the enemy's defences on the left, addressed the following letter to the Hon. Ira Harris, U. S. Senate, and gave me a copy. It describes the situation at that time in some respects so well that I introduce it here :

“HEADQUARTERS, 4TH CORPS,

“WARWICK COURT-HOUSE, VA., April 7, 1862.

“MY DEAR SENATOR : The plan of campaign on this line was

made with the distinct understanding that *four* army corps should be employed, and that the navy should co-operate in the taking of Yorktown, and also (as I understood it) support us on our left by moving gunboats up James river.

"To-day I have learned that the 1st corps, which by the President's order was to embrace four divisions, and one division (Blenker's) of the 2d corps, have been withdrawn altogether from this line of operations and from the Army of the Potomac. At the same time, as I am informed, the navy has not the means to attack Yorktown, and is afraid to send gunboats up James river for fear of the *Merrimac*.

"The above plan of campaign was adopted unanimously by Maj.-Gen. McDowell and Brig.-Gens. Sumner, Heintzelman, and Keyes, and was concurred in by Maj.-Gen. McClellan, who first proposed Urbana as our base.

"This army being reduced by forty-five thousand troops, some of them among the best in the service, and without the support of the navy, the plan to which we are reduced bears scarcely any resemblance to the one I voted for.

"I command the James river column, and I left my camp near Newport News the morning of the 4th instant. I only succeeded in getting my artillery ashore the afternoon of the day before, and one of my divisions had not all arrived in camp the day I left, and for the want of transportation has not yet joined me. So you will observe that not a day was lost in the advance, and in fact we marched so quickly and so rapidly that many of our animals were twenty-four and forty-eight hours without a ration of forage. But, notwithstanding the rapidity of our advance, we were stopped by a line of defence nine or ten miles long, strongly fortified by breastworks, erected nearly the whole distance behind a stream or succession of ponds, nowhere fordable, one terminus being Yorktown and the other ending in the James river, which is commanded by the enemy's gunboats. Yorktown is fortified all around with bastioned works, and on the water-side it and Gloucester are so strong that the navy are afraid to attack either.

"The approaches on one side are generally through low, swampy, or thickly wooded ground, over roads which we are obliged to repair or to make before we can get forward our carriages. The enemy is in great force, and is constantly receiving reinforcements from the two rivers. The line in front of us is therefore one of the strongest ever opposed to an invading force in any country.

"You will, then, ask why I advocated such a line for our operations? My reasons are few but, I think, good.

"With proper assistance from the navy we could take Yorktown, and then with gunboats on both rivers we could beat any force opposed to us on Warwick river, because the shot and shell

from the gunboats would nearly overlap across the Peninsula ; so that if the enemy should retreat—and retreat he must—he would have a long way to go without rail or steam transportation, and every soul of his army must fall into our hands or be destroyed.

“Another reason for my supporting the new base and plan was that this line, it was expected, would furnish water-transportation nearly to Richmond.

“Now, supposing we succeed in breaking through the line in front of us, what can we do next? The roads are very bad, and if the enemy retains command of James river, and we do not first reduce Yorktown, it would be impossible for us to subsist this army three marches beyond where it is now. As the roads are at present, it is with the utmost difficulty that we can subsist it in the position it now occupies.

“You will see, therefore, by what I have said, that the force originally intended for the capture of Richmond should be all sent forward. If I thought the four army corps necessary when I supposed the navy would co-operate, and when I judged of the obstacles to be encountered by what I learned from maps and the opinions of officers long stationed at Fort Monroe, and from all other sources, how much more should I think the full complement of troops requisite now that the navy cannot co-operate, and now that the strength of the enemy's lines and the number of his guns and men prove to be almost immeasurably greater than I had been led to expect ! The line in front of us, in the opinion of all the military men here who are at all competent to judge, is one of the strongest in the world, and the force of the enemy capable of being increased beyond the numbers we now have to oppose to him. Independently of the strength of the lines in front of us, and of the force of the enemy behind them, we cannot advance until we get command of either York river or James river. The efficient co-operation of the navy is, therefore, absolutely essential, and so I considered it when I voted to change our base from the Potomac to Fort Monroe.

“An iron-clad boat must attack Yorktown ; and if several strong gunboats could be sent up James river also, our success will be certain and complete, and the rebellion will soon be put down.

“On the other hand, we must butt against the enemy's works with heavy artillery and a great waste of time, life, and material.

“If we break through and advance, both our flanks will be assailed from two great water-courses in the hands of the enemy ; our supplies would give out, and the enemy, equal, if not superior, in numbers, would, with the other advantages, beat and destroy this army.

“The greatest master of the art of war has said that ‘if you would invade a country successfully, you must have *one* line of operations and *one* army, under *one* general.’ But what is our

condition? The State of Virginia is made to constitute the command, in part or wholly, of some six generals, viz.: Fremont, Banks, McDowell, Wool, Burnside, and McClellan, besides the scrap, over the Chesapeake, in the care of Dix.

"The great battle of the war is to come off here. If we win it the rebellion will be crushed. If we lose it the consequences will be more horrible than I care to foretell. The plan of campaign I voted for, if carried out with the means proposed, will certainly succeed. If any part of the means proposed are withheld or diverted, I deem it due to myself to say that our success will be uncertain.

"It is no doubt agreeable to the commander of the 1st corps to have a separate department, and, as this letter advocates his return to Gen. McClellan's command, it is proper to state that I am not at all influenced by personal regard or dislike to any of my seniors in rank. If I were to credit all the opinions which have been poured into my ears, I must believe that, in regard to my present fine command, I owe much to Gen. McDowell and nothing to Gen. McClellan. But I have disregarded all such officiousness, and I have from last July to the present day supported Gen. McClellan and obeyed all his orders with as hearty a goodwill as though he had been my brother or the friend to whom I owed most. I shall continue to do so to the last and so long as he is my commander, and I am not desirous to displace him, and would not if I could. He left Washington with the understanding that he was to execute a definite plan of campaign with certain prescribed means. The plan was good and the means sufficient, and, without modification, the enterprise was certain of success. But, with the reduction of force and means, the plan is entirely changed, and is now a bad plan, with means insufficient for certain success.

"Do not look upon this communication as the offspring of despondency. I never despond; and when you see me working the hardest you may be sure that fortune is frowning upon me. I am working *now* to my utmost.

"Please show this letter to the President, and I should like also that Mr. Stanton should know its contents. Do me the honor to write to me as soon as you can, and believe me, with perfect respect,

"Your most obedient servant,

"E. D. KEYES,

"Brig.-Gen. Commanding 4th Army Corps.

"Hon. IRA HARRIS,

"U. S. Senate."

The reconnoissances of the 6th and 7th and following days, pushed with great vigor and with some loss, confirmed the impressions gained on the 5th. I verified all these reconnois-



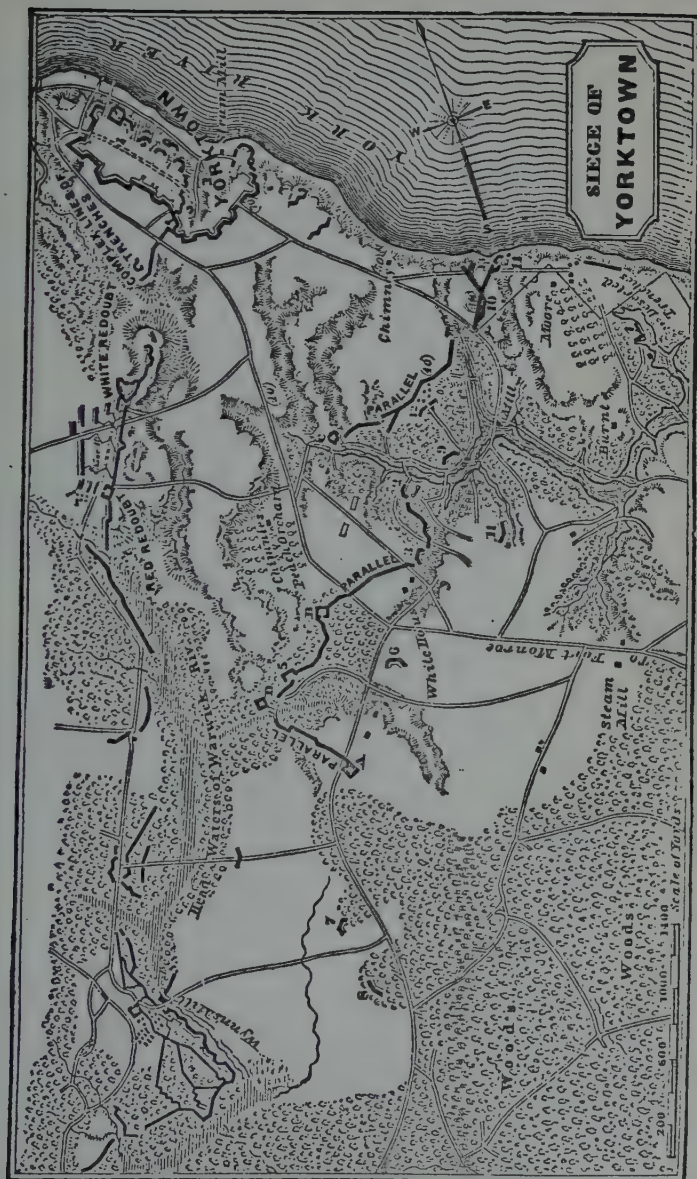
GENERAL MCCLELLAN RECONNOITRING AT YORKTOWN.

sances in person, going everywhere beyond our lines of pickets, and resuming my old trade of reconnoitring officer, so anxious was I to find a practicable point of attack. In fact, during the whole siege I exposed myself more in this way than was proper for a general commanding an army; but I had had far more personal experience in sieges than any of those under my command, and trusted more to my own knowledge and experience than I then could to theirs.

It was found that the Warwick valley headed within two thousand yards of the *enceinte* of Yorktown, and within half that distance of the White Redoubt, or Fort Magruder, a strong work, essentially a part of the main works at Yorktown, which were so strong—having ditches from eight to ten feet deep, and more than fifteen feet wide at the top—and so heavily armed with siege and garrison guns, as to render an assault hopeless. The interval between Yorktown and the Warwick was occupied by strong works, and all the open ground in front, as well as the direct approaches to the town itself, so thoroughly swept by the direct fire of more than fifty guns of the heaviest calibres then known as to render it an act of madness to assault without first silencing the fire of the enemy's artillery. From its head to Lee's Mill the Warwick was flooded by means of artificial inundations, which rendered it unfordable. The dams constructed for this purpose were all covered by strong works so situated as to be unassailable until their artillery-fire was reduced. Below Lee's Mill the river was a tidal stream, not fordable at any stage of the tide. That portion, moreover, was controlled by the fire of the Confederate gunboats in the James river. The valley of the Warwick was generally low and swampy, the approaches to the dams were through dense forests and deep swamps, and every precaution had been taken by the enemy, in the way of felling timber and constructing works, to make a crossing as difficult as possible.

In his report of the 6th of May, immediately after the occupation of Yorktown, Gen. Barnard, chief-engineer of the Army of the Potomac, says:

"They (referring to the groups of works covering the Warwick) are far more extensive than may be supposed from the mention of them I make, and every kind of obstruction which the country affords, such as abattis, marsh, inundation, etc., was skillfully used. The line is certainly one of the most extensive



known to modern times. The country on both sides the Warwick from near Yorktown down is a dense forest with few clearings. It was swampy, and the roads impassable during the heavy rains we have constantly had, except where our own labors had corduroyed them. If we could have broken the enemy's line across the isthmus we could have invested Yorktown, and it must, with its garrison, have soon fallen into our hands. It was not deemed practicable, considering the strength of that line and the difficulty of handling our forces (owing to the impracticable character of the country), to do so. If we could take Yorktown or drive the enemy out of that place, the enemy's line was no longer tenable. This we could do by siege operations. It was deemed too hazardous to attempt the reduction of the place by assault. The operations of the siege required extensive preparations.

"I regret that there is not time and means to prepare a complete plan of this enormous system of defences. They should form part of the record of the operations of the Army of the Potomac. The forcing of such a line with so little loss is in itself an exploit, less brilliant, perhaps, but more worthy of study, than would have been a murderous assault, even had it proved successful."

I need only add to this that Gen. Barnard never expressed to me any opinion that an assault was practicable upon any part of the enemy's defences. From his first reconnoissances he was decidedly of the opinion that the use of heavy guns was necessary. More than this, I never, at the time, heard of any contrary opinion from any one, and, so far as I know, there was entire unanimity on the part of the general officers and chiefs of staff departments that the course pursued was the only one practicable under the circumstances.

From Lee's Mill a line of works extended to the enemy's rear to Skiff's creek, so that if we had forced the passage of the Warwick below that point we would have found a new line of defence in front of us, completely covering the enemy's communications.

During the progress of these reconnoissances every effort was made to bring up supplies and ammunition. A violent storm beginning on the 6th, and continuing without cessation for three or four days, almost entirely interrupted the water-communication between Fortress Monroe and Ship Point, and made the already bad roads terrible beyond description. In those days I more than once thought of a reply made to me by an old gen-

eral of Cossacks, who had served in all the Russian campaigns against Napoleon. I had asked how the roads were in those days, to which he replied : " My son, the roads are always bad in war."

It was not until the 10th that we were able to establish a new depot on Cheeseman's creek, which shortened the haul about three miles. The rains continued almost incessantly, and it was necessary not only to detail large working parties to unload supplies, but details of some thousands of men were required to corduroy the roads, as the only means of enabling us to get up supplies.

As illustrating the condition of things, I insert the following despatch from Mr. John Tucker, Assistant Secretary of War, dated near Yorktown, April 10, to Hon. E. M. Stanton, Secretary of War :

" I reached Gen. McClellan's headquarters at seven this evening, having had an accident to the steamer on the way from Fortress Monroe to Ship Point. I was five hours on horseback (making about five miles), the roads being almost impassable and so entirely occupied with army wagons I frequently had to leave the road and take to the woods. The severe storm at Fortress Monroe prevented transports from leaving for several days. The facilities for landing at Ship Point are very poor, and for several days it must have been next to impossible to move artillery over such roads. I learn that twelve thousand men are engaged in repairing and building new roads. The difficulties of transportation have been so great that some of the cavalry horses had to be sent back to keep them from starving. I will report my observations of army movements to-morrow, but I see an earnest determination to lose no time in attacking the enemy.

" JOHN TUCKER,
" *Assistant Secretary of War.*"

The following telegram was sent as indicated, on April 10, to Brig.-Gen. Thomas, adjutant-general :

I examined the works on enemy's left very carefully to-day. They are very strong, the approaches difficult; enemy in force and confident. Water-batteries at York and Gloucester said to be much increased; have not seen them myself. Have not yet received reports of engineer officers. I go to-morrow to examine our left. Sharp firing on our right for some time to-day while I was there; no harm done, although their shells burst handsomely.

Am receiving supplies from Ship Point, repairing roads, getting up siege artillery, etc.

It seems now almost certain that we must use mortars and heavy guns freely before assaulting. The naval officers urge an attack in rear of Gloucester; I think they are right, but am now too weak to attempt it, unless new circumstances come to my knowledge. The affair will be protracted in consequence of the diminution of my force.

The following was sent to Hon. E. M. Stanton, Secretary of War, on April 8 :

Weather terrible; raining heavily last twenty-eight hours; roads and camps in awful condition; very little firing to-day. Reconnoissances being continued under disadvantageous circumstances. Gen. Sumner has arrived. Most of Richardson's division at Ship Point. I cannot move it from there in present condition of roads until I get more wagons. I need more force to make the attack on Gloucester.

To Brig-Gen. L. Thomas on April 9 :

Weather still execrable; country covered with water; roads terrible. It is with the utmost difficulty that I can supply the troops. We are doing an immense deal of work on the roads. Cannot land siege-train until wind moderates. Reconnoissances being pushed and point of attack pretty well determined. Rebels have thrown ten-inch and twelve-inch shells yesterday and to-day without effect. I have now placed all the troops in bivouac just out of shell-range, holding all our advanced positions with strong detachments well sheltered. I shall not lose an unnecessary hour in placing our heavy guns in battery, and will assault at the earliest practicable moment. The conduct of the troops is excellent.

At this time I received the following letter from the President :

"WASHINGTON, April 9, 1862.

"MY DEAR SIR: Your despatches complaining that you are not properly sustained, while they do not offend me, do pain me very much.

"Blenker's division was withdrawn from you before you left here, and you know the pressure under which I did it, and, as I thought, acquiesced in it—certainly not without reluctance.

"After you left I ascertained that less than 20,000 unorganized men, without a single field-battery, were all you designed

to be left for the defence of Washington and Manassas Junction, and part of this even was to go to Gen. Hooker's old position. Gen. Banks's corps, once designed for Manassas Junction, was diverted and tied up on the line of Winchester and Strasburg, and could not leave it without again exposing the upper Potomac and the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad. This presented, or would present when McDowell and Sumner should be gone, a great temptation to the enemy to turn back from the Rappahannock and sack Washington. My implicit order that Washington should, by the judgment of all the commanders of army corps, be left entirely secure, had been neglected. It was precisely this that drove me to detain McDowell.

"I do not forget that I was satisfied with your arrangement to leave Banks at Manassas Junction; but when that arrangement was broken up, and nothing was substituted for it, of course I was constrained to substitute something for it myself. And allow me to ask, Do you really think I should permit the line from Richmond *via* Manassas Junction to this city to be entirely open, except what resistance could be presented by less than 20,000 unorganized troops? This is a question which the country will not allow me to evade.

"There is a curious mystery about the number of troops now with you. When I telegraphed you on the 6th, saying you had over a hundred thousand with you, I had just obtained from the Secretary of War a statement, taken, as he said, from your own returns, making 108,000 then with you and *en route* to you. You now say you will have but 85,000 when all *en route* to you shall have reached you. How can the discrepancy of 23,000 be accounted for?

"As to Gen. Wool's command, I understand it is doing for you precisely what a like number of your own would have to do if that command was away.

"I suppose the whole force which has gone forward for you is with you by this time. And if so, I think it is the precise time for you to strike a blow. By delay the enemy will relatively gain upon you—that is, he will gain faster by fortifications and reinforcements than you can by reinforcements alone. And once more let me tell you, it is indispensable to you that you strike a blow. I am powerless to help this. You will do me the justice to remember I always insisted that going down the bay in search of a field, instead of fighting at or near Manassas, was only shifting, and not surmounting, a difficulty; that we would find the same enemy and the same or equal entrenchments at either place. The country will not fail to note, is now noting, that the present hesitation to move upon an entrenched enemy is but the story of Manassas repeated.

"I beg to assure you that I have never written you or spoken to you in greater kindness of feeling than now, nor with a fuller

purpose to sustain you, so far as, in my most anxious judgment, I consistently can.—But you must act.

“Yours very truly,

“A. LINCOLN.”

The portions of this letter referring to the arrangements for the defence of Washington and the Shenandoah have already been fully answered and need not be alluded to again in this place.

As regards the discrepancy of 23,000 men, it is sufficient to say that my estimate was made from the actual latest returns of the men present for duty, and was correct. I have no doubt that the number furnished the President was the aggregate present and absent—a convenient mistake not unfrequently made by the Secretary of War.

The number I gave was correct; that furnished the President was incorrect.

In regard to the employment of Wool's command, the authorities in Washington failed to perceive the irony of my remark in my telegram of April 7, to the effect that the only use that could be made of his command was to protect my communications in rear of the point I then occupied. There were no communications to protect beyond Ship Point, and there was no possibility of the roads to Fortress Monroe being troubled by the enemy. Wool's troops were of no possible use to me beyond holding Fortress Monroe, and would have been of very great use if the surplus had been incorporated with the Army of the Potomac.

The whole force sent forward had not joined me at the date of this letter; it was not until seven days later that Casey, Hooker, and Richardson reached the front line; they could not be brought up earlier. I have already shown the impossibility of attacking earlier or otherwise than we actually did.

When in front of Sebastopol in 1855 I asked Gen. Martimprey, chief of staff of the French army in the Crimea, how he found that the cable worked which connected the Crimean with the European lines of telegraph. He said that it worked admirably *from* the Crimea to Paris, but very badly in the opposite direction; and by way of explanation related the following anecdote: He said that immediately after the failure of the assault of June, 1855, the emperor telegraphed Pélissier to renew the assault immediately. Pélissier replied that it was impossible

without certain preliminary preparations which required several weeks. The emperor repeated the peremptory order to attack at once. Pélissier repeated his reply. After one or two more interchanges of similar messages Pélissier telegraphed: "I will not renew the attack until ready; if you wish it done, come and do it yourself." That ended the matter.

Referring for a moment to the President's despatch of April 6, it is well to recall the facts that at that time, instead of 100,000 men, I had—after deducting guards and working parties—much less than 40,000 for attack, and that the portion of the enemy's lines which he thought I had better break through at once was about the strongest of the whole, except, perhaps, the town itself.

The impatience displayed at that time, after so greatly reducing my force, is in remarkable contrast with the patience which permitted Grant to occupy months in front of the lines of Petersburg, far inferior in strength to those of Yorktown.

On the 22d of March I had prepared the following:

CONFIDENTIAL MEMORANDUM.

For the operations against Yorktown, Richmønd, etc., where we will probably find extensive earthworks heavily garrisoned, we shall require the means of overwhelming them by a vertical fire of shells.

I should therefore be glad to have disposable at Fortress Monroe:

- I. 1st. 20 10-inch mortars complete.
- 2d. 20 8-inch mortars complete.
- II. 20 8-inch siege-howitzers.
- III. 20 4½-inch wrought-iron siege-guns.
- IV. 40 20-pounder Parrotts.
- V. — 24-pounder siege-guns.

The 20-pounder Parrotts with the batteries will, of course, be counted as available.

I do not know the number of 4½-inch guns available; if not so many as I have indicated, something else should be substituted. I wish Gen. Barry and Col. Kingsbury to consult with Gen. Marcy, to make such suggestions as occur to them, and ascertain at once to what extent this memorandum can be filled. It is possible we cannot count upon the navy to reduce Yorktown by their independent efforts; we must therefore be prepared to do it by our own means. There are said to be at Yorktown from 27 to 32 heavy guns, at Gloucester 14 Columbiads. The probable armament of Yorktown, when exterior guns are drawn in, will be

from 40 to 50 heavy guns, from 24-pounders to 8-inch and perhaps 10-inch Columbiads."

Before leaving Washington I detailed Col. Robert Tyler's 1st Conn. regiment as heavy artillery, and placed the siege-train in their charge; it will be seen, as the narrative proceeds, how admirably this splendid regiment performed their most important duties at all times and under the most trying circumstances.

As soon as it became clear that no aid was to be had from the navy, and that we must reduce Yorktown by a front attack, I took steps to increase the number of heavy guns and mortars to the extent shown by the statement of batteries given hereafter. The number of officers of the corps of engineers and of the topographical engineers at my disposal was so small that it was necessary to supplement them by civilian employees kindly furnished by Prof. Bache, of the U. S. Coast Survey, and by details from the line. These civilian employees vied with the officers of the army in the courage, devotion, and intelligence with which they performed the dangerous and important duties devolving upon them. There were but twelve officers of the engineers, including four on duty with the three companies of engineer troops, and six of the topographical engineers. These officers at once proceeded to ascertain by close reconnoissances the nature and strength of the enemy's defences and the character of the ground, in order to determine the points of attack and the nature of the necessary works of attack. Meanwhile the troops were occupied in constructing roads to the depots. Gen. Sumner reached the front on the 9th of April, and was placed in command of the left wing, consisting of his own and the 4th corps. He was in front of the line of the Warwick, while the 3d corps was charged with the operations against Yorktown itself. The following despatch to Secretary Stanton shows the condition of affairs at its date, April 11:

The reconnoissances of to-day prove that it is necessary to invest and attack Gloucester Point. Give me Franklin's and McCall's divisions under command of Franklin, and I will at once undertake it. If circumstances of which I am not aware make it impossible for you to send me two divisions to carry out the final plan of campaign, I will run the risk and hold myself responsible for the results if you will give me Franklin's division.

If you still confide in my judgment I entreat that you will grant this request. The fate of our cause depends upon it. Although willing, under the pressure of necessity, to carry this through with Franklin alone, I wish it to be distinctly understood that I think two divisions necessary. Franklin and his division are indispensable to me. Gen. Barnard concurs in this view. I have determined upon the point of attack, and am at this moment engaged in fixing the position of the batteries.

The same day the following reached me :

"By direction of the President, Franklin's division has been ordered to march back to Alexandria and immediately embark for Fortress Monroe.

"L. THOMAS,
"Adj.-Gen."

I replied to the secretary: "I am delighted with Franklin's orders, and beg to thank you."

I insert the following letter from my venerable friend, Francis P. Blair, as an indication of the state of feeling at the time :

"WASHINGTON, April 12, 1862.

"Maj.-Gen. G. B. McClellan :

"MY DEAR SIR: There is a prodigious cry of 'On to Richmond!' among the carpet-knights of our city, who will not shed their blood to get there. I am one of those who wish to see you lead a triumph in the capital of the Old Dominion, but am not so eager as to hazard it by hurrying on too fast. The veterans of Waterloo filled the trenches of Gen. Jackson at New Orleans with their bodies and their blood. If you can accomplish your object of reaching Richmond by a slower process than storming redoubts and batteries in earthworks, the country will applaud the achievement which gives success to its arms with greatest parsimony of the blood of its children. The envious Charles Lee denounced his superior, Washington, as gifted too much with that 'rascally virtue *prudence*.' Exert it and deserve his fame.

Your friend,

"F. P. BLAIR,
"Silver Springs."

My retained copy of the following letter is not dated, but it must have been written somewhere about the 20th of April :

HEADQUARTERS, ARMY OF THE POTOMAC,
BEFORE YORKTOWN.

Hon. E. M. Stanton, Secretary of War :

SIR: I received to-day a note from Assistant Secretary Watson

enclosing an extract from a letter the author of which is not mentioned. I send a copy of the extract with this. I hope that a copy has also been sent to Gen. McDowell, whom it concerns more nearly, perhaps, than it does me.

At the risk of being thought obtrusive I will venture upon some remarks which perhaps my position does not justify me in making, but which I beg to assure you are induced solely by my intense desire for the success of the government in this struggle.

You will, I hope, pardon me if I allude to the past, not in a captious spirit, but merely so far as may be necessary to explain my own course and my views as to the future.

From the beginning I had intended, so far as I might have the power to carry out my own views, to abandon the line of Manassas as the line of advance. I ever regarded it as an improper one; my wish was to adopt a new line, based upon the waters of the lower Chesapeake. I always expected to meet with strong opposition on this line, the strongest that the rebels could offer, but I was well aware that upon overcoming this opposition the result would be decisive and pregnant with great results.

Circumstances, among which I will now only mention the uncertainty as to the power of the *Merrimac*, have compelled me to adopt the present line, as probably safer, though far less brilliant, than that by Urbana. When the movement was commenced I counted upon an active and disposable force of nearly 150,000 men, and intended to throw a strong column upon West Point either by York river or, if that proved impracticable, by a march from the mouth of the Severn, expecting to turn in that manner all the defences of the Peninsula. Circumstances have proved that I was right, and that my intended movements would have produced the desired results.

After the transfer of troops had commenced from Alexandria to Fort Monroe, but before I started in person, the division of Blenker was detached from my command—a loss of near 10,000 men. As soon as the mass of my troops were fairly started I embarked myself. Upon reaching Fort Monroe I learned that the rebels were being rapidly reinforced from Norfolk and Richmond. I therefore determined to lose no time in making the effort to invest Yorktown, without waiting for the arrival of the divisions of Hooker and Richardson and the 1st corps, intending to employ the 1st corps in mass to move upon West Point, reinforcing it as circumstances might render necessary.

The advance was made on the morning of the second day after I reached Fort Monroe. When the troops reached the immediate vicinity of Yorktown the true nature of the enemy's position was for the first time developed. While my men were under fire I learned that the 1st corps was removed from my command. No warning had been given me of this, nor was any

reason then assigned. I should also have mentioned that the evening before I left Fort Monroe I received a telegraphic despatch from the War Department informing me that the order placing Fort Monroe and its dependent troops under my command was rescinded. No reason was given for this, nor has it been to this day. I confess that I have no right to know the reason. This order deprived me of the support of another division which I had been authorized to form for active operations from among the troops near Fort Monroe.

Thus when I came under fire I found myself weaker by five divisions than I had expected when the movement commenced. It is more than probable that no general was ever placed in such a position before.

Finding myself thus unexpectedly weakened, and with a powerful enemy strongly entrenched in my front, I was compelled to change my plans and become cautious. Could I have retained my original force I confidently believe that I would now have been in front of Richmond instead of where I now am. The probability is that that city would now have been in our possession.

But the question now is in regard to the present and the future rather than the past.

The enemy, by the destruction of the bridges of the Rappahannock, has deprived himself of the means of a rapid advance on Washington. Lee will never venture upon a bold movement on a large scale.

The troops I left for the defence of Washington, as I fully explained to you in the letter I wrote the day I sailed, are ample for its protection.

Our true policy is to concentrate our troops on the fewest possible lines of attack; we have now too many, and an enterprising enemy could strike us a severe blow.

I have every reason to believe that the main portion of the rebel forces are in my front. They are *not* "drawing off" their troops from Yorktown.

Give me McCall's division and I will undertake a movement on West Point which will shake them out of Yorktown. As it is, I will win, but I must not be blamed if success is delayed. I do not feel that I am answerable for the delay of victory.

I do not feel authorized to venture upon any suggestions as to the disposition of the troops in other departments, but content myself with stating the least that I regard as essential to prompt success here. If circumstances render it impossible to give what I ask, I still feel sure of success, but more time will be required to achieve the result.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

GEO. B. McCLELLAN,

Maj.-Gen. Commanding.

The affair known as the one-gun battery is explained by the following instructions and statement:

HEADQUARTERS, ARMY OF THE POTOMAC,
CAMP WINFIELD SCOTT, April 15, 1862.

Brig.-Gen. W. F. Smith, Commanding Division :

SIR : You will please advance to-morrow morning to stop the work now being carried on by the enemy near and in rear of the "one-gun battery." This can probably be most readily accomplished by throwing sharpshooters well forward to the edge of the stream, leaving in front of the work a clear interval through which four to six guns can shell the working parties and adjacent woods. Your flank towards Lee's Mill should be carefully watched, also towards Wynn's Mill, communicating with Gen. Gorman, who will have orders to prevent an attack upon your right flank from Wynn's Mill. It is probable that by placing your guns near the burned chimneys, as well under cover as possible, they will accomplish the result.

If the enemy are driven entirely away, advance cautiously a few skirmishers across the dam to penetrate the woods and ascertain whether there is any clearing near at hand where you can hold your own. In this event cross over and send for immediate assistance, which will be promptly afforded. If you find the position across the stream dangerous and untenable, cut the dam.

In any event exercise the utmost caution before crossing the stream. The great object is to stop the work, and merely to take advantage after that of any opportunity that may offer itself to push the advantage. I should prefer stopping the work and attacking when our preparations elsewhere are more advanced. I would prefer making the attack at the one-gun battery a part of a more general plan involving the use of batteries against Lee's Mill and other contiguous points. From the statement of Capt. Hope (had since I wrote the foregoing) I imagine a position can be found on the road at a distance of some twelve hundred yards, whence their works can be shelled with 10-pound Parrotts and probably spherical case from the Napoleon guns. I would be glad to learn that the work is stopped and the enemy taught a lesson.

Please inform Gen. Gorman of your instructions, and inform me as early as possible of your arrangements.

Very truly yours,

GEO. B. McCLELLAN,
Maj.-Gen. Commanding.

P.S. I send this direct to you for the reason that it is too late to communicate it through the commander of the 4th army corps

and give time to execute the movement at a sufficiently early hour.

Upon reflection I think it will, under present circumstances, be wiser to confine the operation to forcing the enemy to discontinue work.

In compliance with these instructions Gen. Smith placed two brigades and three batteries on his left to guard against any attack from Lee's Mill, and commenced operations with his remaining brigade and battery. He posted Mott's battery opposite the dam at a distance of about eleven hundred yards from the works, sent in one regiment through the woods on the right with instructions to open fire on any working parties they might observe, another regiment on the left with similar orders, and held the remaining three regiments in reserve. As soon as our infantry opened fire the enemy replied with shell, upon which Mott opened and kept up a sharp fire for about an hour until he silenced the enemy.

About three o'clock Gen. Smith had placed eighteen guns in position about five hundred yards from the works, supported on either flank by Brooks's Vermont brigade, Hancock's being brought up in support. Our guns then opened, the enemy replying for some time with rapidity; when their fire slackened Smith ordered four companies of the 3d Vermont to cross the dam and feel the enemy. On arriving at the crest of the work they were met by the enemy in force, who had lain secreted, and were forced to retire with a loss of about 20 killed and wounded, after having held the work for some minutes.

Later in the day, after I had left the ground, another reconnoissance was made, under cover of the artillery-fire, by the 4th Vermont on the right, the 5th and 6th on the left, but it was found impracticable to push further than to the dam, which ground was held. During the night strong entrenchments were thrown up, on the right for four guns within three hundred yards of the work, on the left one with eight embrasures, and in the centre one with four embrasures, the last two within five hundred yards' range. This reconnoissance was conducted with skill and great gallantry, the Vermont troops thus early giving earnest of the high qualities they so often displayed during all the war.

The losses in killed, wounded, and missing amounted to about

150. The objects of the operation were completely achieved: we prevented further work at this point, prevented the enemy from using the crossing, and ascertained that the line could not be broken there without further preparation in the way of artillery, etc.

The general plan of operations determined upon was to establish batteries of heavy guns and mortars bearing upon Yorktown and Gloucester, their water-batteries, a line of works between Yorktown and the Warwick river, Wynn's Mill, and the "one-gun battery" about a mile lower down the Warwick.

The general order regulating the details of the siege operations, as well as the instructions issued by Gen. Fitz-John Porter, who, on the 26th of April, was assigned to duty as director of the siege, are for the present omitted. I issued all orders relating to the siege through him, making him commandant of the siege operations, and at the same time chief of staff for that especial work. Under the circumstances of the case some such arrangement was necessary to relieve me of too much personal labor, and it worked admirably.

Ground was broken on the night of the 17th of April upon batteries 1, 2, and 3, it being only at that date that the necessary roads and bridges were completed and the requisite material collected. The first parallel was commenced on the morning of the 25th.

The work was pushed with so much energy that by the night of May 3 all the batteries were completed and nearly all armed; the armament would have been completed on the night of the 5th, and fire opened the next morning.

In all sixteen batteries were constructed, their full armament being two 200-pounder rifled guns, twelve 100-pounder rifled, ten 13-inch mortars, twenty-five 10-inch mortars, seven 8-inch mortars, twelve 4½-inch rifled siege-guns, twelve 30-pounder rifled guns, thirty-two 20-pounder rifled guns, and two 8-inch siege-howitzers, being 114 heavy guns and mortars in all.

In order to conceal our purposes and complete the work with the least possible exposure, none of the batteries were opened, except No. 1, which on the 30th of April opened with excellent effect upon the wharves of Yorktown and Gloucester, in order to prevent the landing of supplies and men.

It was intended to open with all the 114 guns and mortars at once, in order to create the greatest possible moral and physical effect.

Towards the close of the siege it was apparent that the works at Gloucester could not be carried by assault from the rear without some preliminary work in the way of reducing the fire of their batteries on the land side—a matter requiring a good deal of time, and force greater than a single division.

With the force at my disposal it was impossible to reinforce Franklin for that purpose, and I determined, late on the 2d of May, to disembark that division and move it to the front, in order to employ all my force in the assault about to be given, and thus render the result as sure as human foresight could make it. On the 3d, then, Franklin's division was disembarked, and was to have moved to the front on the 4th.

As soon as the fire of the water-batteries was silenced the gunboats, reinforced by the *Galena* under the gallant John Rodgers, were to run by and take up a position in rear, whence they could get a nearer fire on the defences and control the road leading from Yorktown to Williamsburg.

When this was effected, the artillery of the land defences silenced, and the garrison demoralized by the shell-fire, the columns of assault were to advance from the nearest cover.

The principal assault was to have been upon the line between the Warwick and Yorktown, a column being ready to assault the latter if the effect of the batteries justified it. The enfilading and two counter batteries were prepared against Wynn's Mill, which, with the dam next above it, would also have been assaulted at the same time with the main attack.

The counter batteries against Wynn's Mill enfiladed the lines stretching thence towards the "one-gun" battery, against which latter a mortar battery was also prepared; under cover of these and the fire of the field-batteries an assault was also to be made on the "one-gun" battery. Under cover of the field-guns of the 4th corps a feint was to be made upon Lee's Mill, to be converted into a real attack if the effect of the operations at other points opened the way thereto.

The fire of our batteries would probably have enabled us to assault about noon. As the enemy were practically without bomb-proof shelters, the fire of our forty-two mortars, ten

of which were 13-inch and twenty-five 10-inch, should in five or six hours have blown up their magazines and rendered the works untenable for the garrisons. As many of their guns, all in the water-batteries, were *en barbette*, the fire of our seventy-two heavy guns should in the same space of time have dismounted most of their guns; and as the mortars could well continue their fire until the assaulting columns had reached the immediate vicinity of the works, the success of the assault, with very little loss, was reasonably certain.

In order to diminish the risk to the gunboats as much as possible, I proposed to Flag-Officer Goldsborough and to Capt. Smith, commanding the gunboats, that the gunboats and the *Galena* should run the batteries the night after we opened fire. If the effect of our fire had equalled our expectations so as to justify an assault during the first day's firing, I am very sure that Capt. Smith would have run by the batteries in broad daylight, without awaiting the cover of darkness. I have no doubt whatever that at the latest the dawn of the second day would have seen the gunboats in the rear of the defences, and the assault delivered with entire success and without any heavy loss on our side.

Gen. Johnston told me in Washington, during the winter of 1882 and 1883, that one of his strong objections to holding Yorktown was his apprehension that the gunboats would force the batteries at night and thus render the position untenable. Other Confederate general officers serving there have told me that in their opinion, at the time, the gunboats could easily have effected this on any dark night.

Early in the morning of the 4th of May it was found that the enemy had during the night evacuated all his positions, very wisely preferring to avoid the experiment of withstanding a bombardment and assault. We captured in the works, including Gloucester, seventy-seven guns and mortars, supplied with the ordinary complements, and seventy-six rounds of ammunition to each.

The captured pieces were as follows: one 10-inch Columbiad, thirteen 9-inch Dahlgren guns, sixteen 8-inch Columbiads, two 7-inch heavy guns, one 6½-inch rifle, one 4½-inch rifle, one 2½-inch rifle, two rifled 32-pounders, one 8-inch siege-howitzer, three 64-pounders, eight 42-pounders, seventeen 32-pounders, four

24-pounders, one 42-pound carronade, two 8-inch mortars, two 12-pounders, one 6-pounder.

They had evidently removed such guns as they could, probably light guns.

I have been much criticised for not assaulting Yorktown immediately. Perhaps the point has been made clear enough, but at the risk of repetition I will say something more on the subject.

Before starting from Fortress Monroe the best information in our possession clearly indicated that the Warwick river ran nearly parallel with the James, instead of heading at Yorktown, and it seemed certain that the road from Newport News to Williamsburg did not cross that stream, at least any important branch of it, and that it presented no obstacle to an advance. Upon these data were predicated the orders of April 4 (for the march of the next day, the 5th), according to which Heintzelman was to move into position close to Yorktown, while Keyes was to take up a position in rear of Yorktown at the Halfway House; Keyes was also ordered to attack and carry whatever he found in front of him. Now, let it be observed that at all points (on the right, centre, and left) we found the enemy's works fully garrisoned and provided with artillery, and that Keyes and his general officers reported that they found the position in their front so strong and so well provided with troops and artillery that it was impossible to assault with any hope of success. The same state of things was clearly the case in front of the right column, where I was. Now, it is very certain that the only thing to be done was to make close reconnaissances of the enemy's position, in order to discover a vulnerable point. This course was followed, and the unanimous opinion of all was that certain preliminary siege operations were necessary. I assert without fear of contradiction that no one *at that time* thought an assault possible; moreover, that when we saw the works abandoned by the enemy it remained the conviction of all that, with the raw troops we had, an assault would have resulted in simply an useless butchery with no hope of success. The statements made long afterwards by such men as Barnard were simply *ex-post-facto* opinions, gotten up for political purposes, and never could have been really entertained by them. The only fault to be found with the operations at Yorktown is in regard to the slowness with which some of the engineer officers operated. I was often obliged to

make just such reconnoissances as I did at Vera Cruz (when a brevet second lieutenant of engineers) to expedite matters. Had Duane been chief-engineer, operations would have progressed much more rapidly. The co-operation of the navy amounted to little or nothing.

CHAPTER XVII.

Despatches and letters relating to subjects treated in the foregoing and following chapters.

"APRIL 6, Sunday, 4 P.M.

"MY DEAR GENERAL: I have received your favor of this date by Col. Key, and hasten to say that I have already written you—*via* Shipping Point—in reply, giving my reason for not having joined you. The time you proposed to proceed with me had elapsed, and particularly the difficulties of my leaving my vessel owing to the want of officers of experience to take care of her.

"I have explained in my note of to-day; and have repeated to Col. Key, the greatly increased strength of the fortifications as seen from this position. The forts at Gloucester are very formidable indeed, and the water-batteries of Yorktown have evidently been increased in dimensions within a few days, as indicated by the new earth.

"As I pointed out to you in our interview, the works to be most apprehended (though they all are too formidable for our vessels, or three or four times their numbers and class) are the guns in mask about one-quarter to one-half of a mile this side of Yorktown, which position I point out to Col. Key.

"The enemy are still on Gloucester Point—how strong I cannot say. So long as he holds that formidable work (or, indeed, upper and lower work) we surely cannot command the York river. All the gunboats of the navy would fail to take it, but would be destroyed in the attempt. Yet I will not hesitate to try the experiment, if required to do so, with this force, however inadequate.

"I have explained to Col. Key that if you turn the masked work, which I fired on to-day and received its fire in return, the guns would command the next water-battery, which is about one-fifth of a mile from it towards Yorktown, as it appears from this ship.

"With those two batteries carried, this force might approach near enough to shell Yorktown at long range, but nothing more. These vessels of this class are not calculated for closer or heavier work.

"As I could not go in time to reach you to-day, as requested, I sent, after despatching my letter to you, the second in rank, Lieut.-Com. Clitz, to confer with you. And now, with Col. Key,

I proceed to Wormsley's creek to meet you or Gen. Heintzelman.

"Very truly yours,

"J. F. MISSROOM,
"Com.

"To Maj.-Gen. McCLELLAN."

"Wachusett, April 10, 1862.

"MY DEAR GENERAL: Enclosed is the report upon the landing from this part of the river at 'Sand-Box,' where it was intended to land troops. Capt. Nicholson says he found a good picket-guard house for cavalry, stables, etc., within the Box, and some cattle near Too's Point. A steamer also penetrated a mile up Back creek to-day—which is within the Sand-Box, and whose entrance is to the eastward of Too's Point, as shown by the chart, and over which is good eight feet—to within one and a half miles of Wormsley's creek.

"It has been observed to-day that large numbers of infantry have been transported from Yorktown to Gloucester Point. And this afternoon a number of what seemed to be laborers with entrenching tools went to the same point; we conclude either to strengthen the works there or to throw up works opposite to and within long rifle-range of this anchorage. I have been expecting some such movement, and wondering why they did not try it from some point back from the beach so far that our guns (shell) could not reach them. It cannot be prevented by us.

"Very truly yours,

"J. F. MISSROOM.

"To Maj.-Gen. McCLELLAN."

"APRIL 11, 6 A.M.

"The enemy very busy last night between Yorktown and Gloucester Point. Schooners observed to be going continually. Enemy may have notice of intention to land troops at Severn and are fortifying its entrance. Ten schooners now in sight.

"J. F. MISSROOM.

"To Maj.-Gen. G. B. McCLELLAN."

HEADQUARTERS, ARMY OF POTOMAC,
NEAR YORKTOWN, April 8, 1862.

MY DEAR FLAG-OFFICER: Your kind letter received. From the information received thus far I am inclined to think that the "masked battery" on the river-bank below Yorktown is not in existence, but that the gun fired upon Missroom was upon the advanced bastion of the place itself. Porter thinks that he has found a place from which we can enfilade their water-batteries.

I go there in a few minutes to look at it. Should it prove to be so, we can enable the gunboats to take an effective part in the contest. The weather is infamous (has been raining hard for the last eighteen hours, and still continues), the roads are horrid, and we have the devil's own time about supplies.

I have made strong representations as to the withdrawal of the 1st corps, which has forced me to abandon the turning movement, and hope that the President may be induced to change his order. . . . The position of the enemy is immensely strong, but we are learning more of it every hour. Our men behave splendidly—brave and patient as men can be. . . .

G. B. McCLELLAN,
Maj.-Gen. Commanding.

Flag-Officer L. M. GOLDSBOROUGH, *Minnesota.*

"WASHINGTON, April 16.

"*To Gen. McClellan :*

"Good for the first lick ! Hurrah for Smith and the one-gun battery ! Let us have Yorktown, with Magruder and his gang, before the 1st of May, and the job will be over.

"EDWIN M. STANTON,
"Secretary of War."

"U. S. STEAMER *Wachusett*,
"YORK RIVER, April 17, 1862.

"MY DEAR GENERAL : In accordance with your request to have shell thrown into Yorktown yesterday, the *Sebago* (side-wheel) was ordered on that service, she being the only vessel here provided with a long-range rifle.

"Her fire was returned by two guns of equal range from the enemy with surprising accuracy. One shell passed directly between the 'smoke-stack' and mainmast, a few feet above her deck, and another within a few feet of the wheel-house, throwing the water over the vessel, and both within a short distance of her boilers and machinery, which are altogether exposed. Had she been crippled the attempt to withdraw her might, and probably would, have caused the sacrifice of other vessels also.

"The *Sebago* is the vessel capable of rendering the most important service in covering the landing of troops, and I submit whether it would not be advisable to defer any attempt to throw shell in Yorktown till night, while she can operate on Gloucester with impunity at any time. She draws six feet of water. A single shot in the midship section of that vessel especially, or indeed of either of these gunboats, disables if it do not destroy her.

"Would it not be possible for your cannon to dismount those two rifles with which the enemy fired at the *Sebago* yesterday ?

They will inflict much damage on our people when Gloucester is held by them, as well as on our vessels.

"The *Sebago* threw shells into Gloucester last night three several times. I am advised that another light-draught steamer, similar to the *Sebago*, is to come here. We cannot have the accuracy of fire from a vessel that the enemy exhibited yesterday.

"Many thanks for the loan of fuses.

"I am, very truly, your obedient servant,

"J. F. MISSROOM, *Com.*

"To Maj.-Gen. G. B. McCLELLAN."

"WASHINGTON, April 18.

"To Gen. G. B. McClellan :

"Your despatch of this morning received and communicated to the President. He directs me to ask you whether the indications do not show that they are inclined to take the offensive. Banks has moved to Mount Jackson yesterday, and to New Market to-day ; has taken some locomotives and prisoners.

"EDWIN M. STANTON,

"*Secretary of War.*"

HEADQUARTERS, ARMY OF THE POTOMAC,

April 18, 10 P.M.

Hon. E. M. Stanton; Secretary of War :

Despatch received. I cannot hope such good-fortune as that the enemy will take the offensive. I am perfectly prepared for any attack the enemy may make. He will do nothing more than sorties. I beg that the President will be satisfied that the enemy cannot gain anything by attacking me ; the more he does attack the better I shall be contented. All is well. I am glad to hear of Banks's good-fortune.

G. B. McCLELLAN,

Maj.-Gen.

Confidential.

HEADQUARTERS, ARMY OF THE POTOMAC,

April 18, 11.30 P.M.

His Excellency the President :

If compatible with your impressions as to the security of the capital, and not interfering with operations of which I am ignorant, I would be glad to have McCall's division, so as to be enabled to make a strong attack upon West Point to turn the position of the enemy. After all that I have heard of things which have occurred since I left Washington and before, I would

prefer that Gen. McDowell should not again be assigned to duty with me.

G. B. McCLELLAN,
Maj.-Gen. Commanding.

WASHINGTON, April 27, 1862.

"Maj.-Gen. McClellan :

"I am rejoiced to learn that your operations are progressing so rapidly and with so much spirit and success, and congratulate you, and the officers and soldiers engaged, upon the brilliant affair mentioned in your telegram, repeating the assurance that everything in the power of the department is at your service. I hope soon to congratulate you upon a splendid victory that shall be the finishing stroke of the war in every quarter. The work goes bravely on.

"Yours truly,

EDWIN M. STANTON,
"Secretary of War."

WASHINGTON, May 1, 2 P.M.

"Maj.-Gen. G. B. McClellan :

"Your call for Parrott guns from Washington alarms me, chiefly because it aims indefinite procrastination. Is anything to be done?

A. LINCOLN,
"President."

HEADQUARTERS, ARMY OF THE POTOMAC,
May 1, 9.30 P.M.

His Excellency the President :

I asked for the Parrott guns from Washington for the reason that some expected had been two weeks, nearly, on the way and could not be heard from. They arrived last night. My arrangements had been made for them, and I thought time might be saved by getting others from Washington. My object was to hasten, not procrastinate. All is being done that human labor can accomplish.

G. B. McCLELLAN,
Maj.-Gen.

HEADQUARTERS, ARMY OF THE POTOMAC,
May 3, 1862.

Hon. E. M. Stanton, Secretary of War :

I regret to learn that Col. Campbell, 5th Penn. Cavalry, has been placed in arrest by Maj.-Gen. McDowell for endeavoring to comply with my positive order to him to report with his regiment for duty at this place. This regiment was never assigned to Gen.

McDowell's army corps, but was detailed by me to Gen. Keyes's corps. I, of course, expected it to follow me as soon as transportation could be provided, and am not a little surprised to learn that my instructions have been interfered with and my force diminished by the action of the commanding officer of the Department of the Rappahannock, in violation of G. O. No. 29, War Department, adjutant-general's office, March 22, 1862. Under these circumstances I beg the immediate interposition of the War Department to relieve from arrest a meritorious officer, against whom there appears to be no complaint save that of obedience to the orders of his rightful superior. I also ask that the regiment, as well as the 1st N. J., Col. Wyndham, may be permitted to join the army under my command without further delay.

G. B. McCLELLAN,
Maj.-Gen. Commanding.

"Wachusett, YORK RIVER,
"April 22, 1862.

"MY DEAR GENERAL: The carriage on board the *Sebago* is weak. Two carriage-makers are coming to us from Washington; I fear not in time. I am promised, if she comes in time, a steamer with 100-pounder rifle.

"The *Corwin* has no battery but a 20-pounder and two sixes, being only a surveying-craft.

"When you commence attack the 100-pounder rifle can assist from the beginning. But I fear our stock of ammunition, especially shell and 'thirty' fuses, will fail us soon.

"I have failed to get what I have asked for from Hampton Roads. Can you loan us some 100-pounder shell and some more 'thirty' fuses for the *Sebago*? She has only about thirty-six fuses of that kind now. Our stock at Hampton Roads was sent to North Carolina.

"Please see the despatch I have just sent to Com. Poor. I sent a steamer to land your mortars at two A.M., with tackle.

"I ought to see you once more before you open fire on Yorktown, to have a clear understanding. Say when I shall go to you, and I will do so any time, at any day, after four P.M.

"The enemy's troops showing themselves now near spot last driven from, abreast anchorage.

"Yours very truly,

"J. F. MISSROOM.

"To Maj.-Gen. G. B. McCLELLAN."

"We got eleven-inch shell into Yorktown and Gloucester last night.

"J. F. MISSROOM."

"FORTRESS MONROE, May 4.

"Maj.-Gen. McClellan :

"With my whole heart I do most cordially congratulate you on your brilliant and important achievement. The gunboats shall accompany you up York river.

"L. M. GOLDSBOROUGH,
"Flag-Officer."

"WASHINGTON, May 4, 1862.

"Maj.-Gen. McClellan :

"Accept my cordial congratulations upon the success at Yorktown, and I am rejoiced to hear that your forces are in active pursuit. Please favor me with the details as far as they are acquired, and I hope soon to hear your arrival at Richmond.

"EDWIN M. STANTON,
"Secretary of War."

"FORT MONROE, May 5, 1862.

"Maj.-Gen. McClellan :

"The Secretary of War telegraphs me to inform him how many transports of all descriptions I can command. Please place at my disposal all you can release, except such as are required for the transportation of stores. . . .

"JOHN TUCKER,
"Assistant Secretary of War."

"CAMP NEAR YORKTOWN, May 5.

"J. Tucker, Assistant Secretary of War, Fortress Monroe :

"In reply to a part of your despatch which the time for the departure of the boat did not admit of answering, and in the absence of Gen. McClellan to the front, I have to inform you that the general has ordered all the available transports to carry troops to West Point, and a part of them have started for Cheeseman's creek. Your despatch will be laid before the general this evening.

"R. B. MARCY,
"Chief of Staff."

NEAR WILLIAMSBURG, May 5, 11.45 P.M.

Hon. E. M. Stanton, Secretary of War :

Mr. Tucker's telegram relating to the vessels was received after Franklin's division had embarked and on the way to West Point. Another division goes in the morning, and the last is absolutely necessary to support the first. This movement is of the greatest importance. I will release the vessels just as soon

as the troops are landed. Nothing new except what I told you in my last despatch.

GEO. B. McCLELLAN,
Maj.-Gen. Commanding.

P. S. Some of the main works of the enemy are in our possession, and I am pushing troops forward, but the roads are horrible.

G. B. McCLELLAN,
Maj.-Gen. Commanding.

WILLIAMSBURG, May 6, 3 P.M.

A portion of the army has left for the upper York, and it would be destruction to deprive me of the water-transportation now. It is absolutely necessary that I should complete the movement now commenced, or the consequences will be fatal.

G. B. McCLELLAN,
Maj.-Gen. Commanding.

Hon. E. M. STANTON,
Secretary of War.

HEADQUARTERS, ARMY OF THE POTOMAC,
CAMP WINFIELD SCOTT, May 4, 1862.

Brig.-Gen. Heintzelman, Commanding 3d Corps :

I have received information from Gen. Smith that the enemy are still in front of him in some force of infantry and cavalry. Gen. Stoneman has been ordered to move as rapidly as possible to the Halfway House, and to take possession of the cross-road near that place, to cut off this command, and also to send a strong reconnoissance toward's Blen's wharf.

I wish Hooker to follow this movement with the utmost rapidity. When he reaches the point where the road branches off near the Halfway House, to leave a portion of his force there, and with the rest to gain the Lee's Mill and Williamsburg road, so as to support Stoneman and aid him in cutting off the retreat of the enemy. The division should move simply with its ambulances and some reserve ammunition, with not more than two days' rations. Should further information from Smith render it necessary to move Kearny's division also, I would be glad to have you take control of the entire movement. Smith is in possession of their works, and the enemy referred to are some distance in rear of them—how far I do not yet know.

GEO. B. McCLELLAN,
Maj.-Gen. Commanding.

"MAY 4, 1862.

"Col A. V. Colburn :

"SIR : Smith has reported that the enemy is in some force in

his front. Keyes has advanced two brigades and a regiment of horse, with three batteries. They have seen no enemy, but have had a few men injured by the bursting of shells left by the enemy.

"I leave immediately to take command on the left. Telegraph me at Smith's, with duplicates for me at Keyes's headquarters.

"Very respectfully,

"E. O. SUMNER,
"Brig.-Gen. Commanding the Left Wing."

"TWO MILES BEYOND YORKTOWN.

"Gen. Marcy, Chief of Staff:

"Gen. Stoneman has met the enemy about three miles beyond the Halfway House, and has sent back for the infantry to support him. Two brigades are ahead of me.

"Yours, etc.,

"S. V. HEINTZELMAN,
"Brig.-Gen. Commanding 3d Corps."

"HEADQUARTERS, 3D CORPS, IN SIGHT OF WILLIAMSBURG,
"6 P.M., Sunday, May 4, 1862.

"Gen. R. B. Marcy:

"I have just arrived here, and find Gens. Sumner and Smith here. We will soon have three divisions, and are preparing to attack the rebels, who are entrenched in our front with two pieces of artillery, a regiment or so of cavalry, four or five regiments of infantry. Our cavalry have been repulsed with a loss of near 40 men and horses killed and wounded. We will soon carry the works. The infantry are only halting a moment to take a bite and rest.

"Yours, etc.,

"S. V. HEINTZELMAN,
"Brig.-Gen."

The following is a fragment of a letter of instructions sent to Gen. Sumner on the morning of the 4th, when he went to assume command on the left; and the condition of affairs then was that the enemy's infantry and cavalry were reported by Smith to be about one and one-half miles in his front in force. I had ordered Stoneman, supported by Hooker, to gain the Halfway House by a rapid march, and thus cut off the retreat of this force in front of Smith. Sumner was ordered to repair the bridges over the Warwick, etc., as quickly as possible, and then to

"Cross the stream with the 5th Cavalry, Smith's and Couch's divisions, and Casey's if necessary. It is possible that Sedgwick's and Richardson's divisions may be needed to reinforce the right. Please hold them subject to the general's orders for that purpose. Should you be informed that they are not needed here you will be at liberty to substitute one of them for Couch's or Casey's division. It is hoped to get Stoneman's command in rear of the enemy before you attack. Watch the enemy closely with your cavalry, and should he retreat attack him without further instructions. The gunboats have gone up the York river, and Franklin's, and perhaps one other division, will follow up to-day. As soon as the bridges are finished you can cross your command and bring them into position, but do not attack unless the enemy retreat or you receive orders from me.

"A. V. COLBURN,

"A. A. G."

It is unnecessary to say that the object of forbidding an attack unless the enemy retreated was to enable Stoneman to get in their rear and thus cut off the entire command.

After the orders to Stoneman, Sumner, and Heintzelman had been issued and were being carried out I received the following :

"HEADQUARTERS, SMITH'S DIVISION, May 4.

'Gen. McClellan :

"Gen. Hancock is in front, and, from what I have learned, presume it is nothing but the rear guard. I will obey his orders as far as engaging them is concerned. The enemy is one and a half miles in front, and it is probably nothing but cavalry covering the retreat.

"W. F. SMITH,

"Brig.-Gen."

"HEADQUARTERS, SMITH'S DIVISION,

"May 5, 10.30 P.M.

"Gen. McClellan :

"There is a direct road from here to Williamsburg behind the big fort. If you send a good man to command, and these men don't leave to-night, we can capture them all in the morning and be at Williamsburg by eight o'clock. If they don't leave to-night they will give us a big fight in the morning, and we shall whip them.

"Don't risk yourself any more, or your commanders, and don't send Richardson to command this column. As far as I can see it is open country for cavalry, but the rain has made the ground soft. I have more troops—or shall have with Brooks—

than I need to defend myself, but it is my earnest opinion that your advance up the James should be this way.

"W. F. SMITH."

On the back of a pencil-sketch of the ground is the following :

"Two companies garrison each fort. Fort Magruder is the far one from here—one and a quarter miles; second fort occupied; third fort, near York, is yet unfinished. They seem to be quiet now. Please order Brooks and Ayres to me in the morning at daylight. I have plenty of troops, but wish our own.

"W. F. S."

"MOUNT ZION CHURCH,
"May 5, 3 P.M.

"Gen. McClellan :

"Owing to delays in the troops coming forward, I have come down here to hasten their march, by direction of Gen. Sumner. Within the last thirty minutes he has sent me two messengers to say that the enemy was gaining ground on him. I fear nothing except a panic amongst our troops, for I am certain we are vastly superior in strength to the enemy. I went myself with a brigade of my corps, which took possession of two works on the left of the enemy. I convinced myself that the enemy commenced his audacious attack upon us to cover a retreat, but, finding that he forces us back, he may convert his feint into something more serious than was at first intended. It may be advisable, if you have troops to spare, to set some of them in motion for this point; but, above all, come yourself.

"The rear of Gen. Kearny has just passed this point on his way to reinforce Gen. Hooker, and the head of his column has probably reached the scene of action; and the firing has ceased for the last ten minutes.

"I write this note because the badness of the road, preventing the rapid concentration of troops, makes me anxious to take precaution against the possibility of reverses. As the roads must soon become absolutely impassable for supplies, our troops must starve unless you can send provisions by boats to skirt the shore, and to be put ashore in small boats. Our position is accessible to York river. The men can live on bread and bacon.

"In haste, your obedient servant,

"E. D. KEYES,

"Brig.-Gen. 4th Corps.

"P.S. An officer from Gen. Hooker's division reports this moment that three of his batteries have been taken by the pieces miring and the horses being killed. This officer reports that the men are exhausted for want of proper food."

"IN FRONT OF WILLIAMSBURG,

"May 5, 1862, 11.20 A.M.

"Capt. Chauncey McKeever, A. A. G.:

"I have had a hard contest all the morning, but do not despair of success. My men are hard at work, but a good deal exhausted. It is reported to me that my communication with you by the Yorktown road is clear of the enemy. Batteries, cavalry, and infantry can take front by the side of mine to whip the enemy.

"Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

"HOOKER,

"Brig.-Gen."

"MAY 5, late at night.

"MY DEAR GENERAL: I did the best I could after getting your order, which was after dark some time. I sent a brigade (Martindale's) to occupy the front of York. The roads were horrible and blocked up by wagons, so that they were impassable. The brigade reached York. I sent some of Hunt's batteries; they got there and halted. The remainder I kept ready to march at two o'clock, or as soon as light enough. All are rested and fresh. Sykes's and my other brigades are in camp, also Blake. Franklin, I think, got off. I hope you have got order out of chaos. Capt. Norton says Ingalls told him he had received an order from the secretary to fit out a sea expedition, which would derange his plans considerably. A telegram can always reach me from York. We are ready to move quickly. I have directed Martindale to camp at York.

"Yours ever,

"F. J. PORTER."

HEADQUARTERS, ARMY OF THE POTOMAC,

WILLIAMSBURG, May 7, 1862, 12.30 P.M.

Gen. R. B. Marcy, Chief of Staff, Camp Winfield Scott:

GENERAL: Headquarters will be moved at once to this place; wagons light. Porter will complete his embarkation as rapidly as possible and join Franklin. The artillery of the divisions Franklin, Sedgwick, and Porter will proceed by water with the least possible delay to join their divisions, also Franklin's cavalry and as many wagons as possible. Hunt's heavy batteries will move to Brick House landing by water. I will give orders in regard to the rest of Hunt's batteries, the regular infantry, Roach's and Gregg's cavalry shortly.

Please send me last news from Franklin, and, if necessary, send a fast special boat to learn state of affairs, and communicate on return with signal party at Queen's creek, as well as *via* Yorktown by telegraph. The orders for Sumner and Richard-

son will be given to-day ; in the meantime let neither embark without special orders from me : this is imperative.

How soon can the artillery of Franklin, Sedgwick, and Porter be embarked? How soon Franklin's cavalry? How soon will transports be ready for the regular infantry and Richardson? How soon can water-transportation be furnished for Duane and his train? For Woodbury and his trains? How soon for Gregg and Rush? How many wagons has Van Vliet in reserve for general purposes? If you send steamer to Franklin, inform him that Stoneman was some fourteen miles from here a couple of hours ago, and will try to communicate with him *via* Hockaday's Spring this evening. I start Smith's division this evening, and hope to get most of the column in motion by the morning. Will move in person to-morrow morning. Would like to have a gunboat examine Moody's wharf, to see whether burned.

G. B. McCLELLAN,
Maj.-Gen. Commanding.

"BRICK HOUSE POINT, May 6, 1862.

"*Gen. G. B. McClellan :*

"I am landing at Brick House Point. It is, however, a bad landing ; the water shoal for a long distance out—a quarter of a mile from shore. One brigade is landed. The enemy is said to be in force on the road, watching this point ; I do not believe it, however. I hope to get the artillery and two other brigades off before morning.

"W. B. FRANKLIN,
"*Brig.-Gen.*"

"BRICK HOUSE, May 7, A.M.

"*Gen. G. B. McClellan :*

"All of my division has landed except the cavalry. The night passed with nothing unusual except the killing of one picket. We have two prisoners, taken when we first arrived ; they belong to a Texan regiment, are very intelligent, but lie, I think. I send them to Yorktown by the *Spaulding*. Dana's brigade is here and will be landed this morning. The indications are that the enemy is in the vicinity.

"W. B. FRANKLIN,
"*Brig.-Gen.*"

"BRICK HOUSE, May 7, 1862.

"*Gen. G. B. McClellan :*

"The road from Brick House Point to the main road is not as laid down on the photographic or C. S. maps. The right

flank and rear are surrounded by a creek, and the left flank has another creek, leaving a small opening through which the road winds. I have ordered an examination to determine more accurately these points, but it is a slow business on account of want of cavalry. I still think it may be an open question between this point and West Point.

"W. B. FRANKLIN,
"Brig.-Gen."

"HEADQUARTERS, FRANKLIN'S DIVISION,
"BRICK HOUSE, May 7, 1862.

Gen. R. B. Marcy, Chief of Staff :

"GENERAL: I have the honor to report that this morning, about seven o'clock, our pickets were driven in on our left flank, and that after skirmishing for about two hours the action became quite sharp at the right extremity of that flank. Our reserves were driven in several times, but returned to their position each time with ardor. Finally we held the position which we had taken in the morning, and at several points of the line advanced our position.

"Wherever we advanced the enemy was found in rifle-pits. The day has been a success, and but for the extreme want of forage and provisions, owing to the deficiency of transportation and the difficulty of landing, we might have followed it up. As it is, I congratulate myself that we have maintained our position. Gen. Newton's command was most severely engaged, and his conduct and that of Gen. Slocum, who had charge respectively of the left and right wings, was admirable. All of the officers and men behaved admirably, and with transportation and forage we could move on to-morrow.

"I respectfully request that instructions may be given to send up forage and transportation immediately, as we are entirely tied down for want of them. Gen. Sedgwick's infantry has arrived. The killed and wounded amount to nearly a hundred. A more detailed report will be given as soon as possible.

"Very respectfully,

"W. B. FRANKLIN,
"Brig.-Gen."

CAMP 19 MILES FROM WILLIAMSBURG,
May 11, 1862.

Hon. E. M. Stanton, Secretary of War, Fortress Monroe :

Without waiting for further official reports which have not yet reached me, I wish to bear testimony to the splendid conduct of Hooker's and Kearny's divisions, under command of Gen. Heintzelman, in the battle of Williamsburg. Their bearing was worthy of veterans. Hooker's division for hours gallantly with-

stood the attack of greatly superior numbers, with very heavy loss. Kearny's arrived in time to restore the fortunes of the day, and came most gallantly into action. I shall probably have occasion to call attention to other commands, and do not wish to do injustice to them by mentioning them now. If I had had the full information I now have in regard to the troops above-named when I first telegraphed, they would have been specially mentioned and commended. I spoke only of what I knew at the time, and shall rejoice to do full justice to all engaged.

G. B. McCLELLAN,
Maj.-Gen. Commanding.

CHAPTER XVIII.

PRIVATE LETTERS.

[April 1 to May 5, 1862.]

Steamer "Commodore," April 1, 1862, Potomac River, 4.15 P.M.—As soon as possible after reaching Alexandria I got the *Commodore* under way and "put off." I did not feel safe until I could fairly see Alexandria behind us. I have brought a tug with us to take back despatches from Budd's Ferry, where I shall stop a few hours for the purpose of winding up everything. I found that if I remained at Alexandria I would be annoyed very much, and perhaps be sent for from Washington. . . . Officially speaking, I feel very glad to get away from that sink of iniquity. . . .

8 P.M.—I have just returned from a trip in one of the naval vessels with Capt. Seymour to take a look at the rebel batteries (recently abandoned) at Shipping Point, etc. They were pretty formidable, and it would have given us no little trouble to take possession of them had they held firm. It makes only the more evident the propriety of my movements, by which Manassas was forced to be evacuated and these batteries with it. The trip was quite interesting. . . .

Steamer "Commodore," April 3, Hampton Roads, 1.30 P.M.— . . . I have been up to my eyes in business since my arrival. We reached here about four yesterday P.M.; ran into the wharf and unloaded the horses, then went out and anchored. Marcy and I at once took a tug and ran out to the flag-ship *Minnesota* to see Goldsborough, where we remained until about nine, taking tea with him.

On our return we found Gen. Heintzelman, soon followed by Porter and Smith, all of whom remained here all night. I sat up very late arranging movements, and had my hands full. I have been hard at work all the morning, and not yet on shore. Dine with Gen. Wool to-day at four, and go thence to our camp.

We move to-morrow A.M. Three divisions take the direct road to Yorktown, and will encamp at Howard's Bridge. Two take the James River road and go to Young's Mill. The reserve goes to Big Bethel, where my headquarters will be to-morrow night.

My great trouble is in the want of wagons—a terrible drawback; but I cannot wait for them. I hope to get possession, before to-morrow night, of a new landing-place some seven or eight miles from Yorktown, which will help us very much. It is probable that we shall have some fighting to-morrow; not serious, but we may have the opportunity of drubbing Magruder. The harbor here is very crowded; facilities for landing are bad. I hope to get possession of Yorktown day after to-morrow. Shall then arrange to make the York river my line of supplies. The great battle will be (I think) near Richmond, as I have always hoped and thought. I see my way very clearly, and, with my trains once ready, will move rapidly. . . .

Telegram—*Great Bethel, April 4, 1862, 6 P.M.*—My advanced guard five miles from Yorktown. Some slight skirmishing to-day. Our people driving rebels. Hope to invest Yorktown to-morrow. All well and in good spirits.

Big Bethel, April 5, 2 A.M.— . . . Have just got through with the orders for to-morrow; have been working very hard, and have sent off officers and orderlies in every direction. I feel sure of to-morrow. I have, I think, provided against every contingency, and shall have the men well in hand if we fight to-morrow. . . . I saw yesterday a wonderfully cool performance. Three of our men had gone close down to the enemy's position after a sheep, which they killed, skinned, and started off with. They were, of course, fired at frequently, and in the course of their travels a 12-pound shot struck directly by them. They quietly picked up the shot, held on to the sheep, and brought the shot to me, yet warm. I never saw so cool and gallant a set of men; they do not seem to know what fear is.

Near Yorktown, April 6, 1 A.M.— . . . I find the enemy in strong force and in a very strong position, but will drive him out. Fitz-John is in the advance on the right, Baldy on the

left; they are doing splendidly. Their divisions have been under fire all the afternoon; have lost only about five killed in each, and have punished secesh badly. Thus far it has been altogether an artillery affair.

While listening this P.M. to the sound of the guns I received an order detaching McDowell's corps from my command. It is the most infamous thing that history has recorded. I have made such representations as will probably induce a revocation of the order, or at least save Franklin to me. The idea of depriving a general of 35,000 troops when actually under fire!

To-morrow night I can tell you exactly what I intend doing. We have no baggage to-night, our wagons being detained by the bad roads. I have taken possession of a hut in a deserted secesh camp; found a table therein, and sleep on a horse-blanket, if I find time to "retire." Colburn is copying a long letter; Seth, standing by the fire, looking *very* sleepy. He wakes up and sends his kindest regards, in which Colburn asks to participate. I am sorry to say that your father is snoring loudly in a corner.

April 6, 1.40 P.M.— . . . Did not get to bed until 3.30, and then my bed was a rather rough one, as our wagons did not arrive. Things quiet to-day; very little firing; our people are pushing their reconnoissances and getting up supplies. I shall take the place, but may be some time in effecting it. . . .

April 8, 8 A.M.—Raining hard all night, and still continues to do so. Am now encamped about five miles from Yorktown; have been here two or three days. Have now visited both the right and left, and, in spite of the heavy rain, must ride to Ship Point and our right immediately after breakfast. All I care for about the rain is the health and comfort of the men. They are more fond of me than ever; more enthusiastic than I deserve; wherever I go it seems to inspire the fullest confidence. . . .

I have raised an awful row about McDowell's corps. The President very coolly telegraphed me yesterday that he thought I had better break the enemy's lines at once! I was much tempted to reply that he had better come and do it himself.

April 9, near Yorktown, 8 A.M.— . . . Last night returned late and was fully occupied with reports of reconnoissances, etc., until very late.

It rained nearly every moment yesterday, all the night before, all last night, but has now stopped, though likely to commence again at any moment. It is execrable weather ; everything knee-deep in mud ; roads infamous : but we will get through it. I have had great difficulty in arranging about supplies—so few wagons and such bad roads. Rode down to Ship Point yesterday morning. . . .

9 A.M.—Interrupted and unable to finish. Have been bothered all the evening, but am getting things straightened out. . . . Start for the Point in a few minutes. . . .

April 10, 10 P.M.—Have had a pretty long ride to-day. Secretary Fox spent last night with me. As soon as he had gone I rode to Porter's camp, thence to the river-bank to meet Capt. Missroom, commanding the gunboats. Have had an excellent view of the water defences of Yorktown, as well as of Gloucester. The enemy is very strong and is adding to his works and the number of his men. I could see them coming in on schooners. But as my heavy guns are not yet landed, and the navy do not feel strong enough to go at them, I can only hurry forward our preparations and trust that the more they have the more I shall catch. . . .

Yesterday I also spent on the right, taking, under cover of the heavy rain, a pretty good look at the ground in front of York and its defences. I got back about dark, pretty wet and tired out. . . . To-morrow we move headquarters to a much better and more convenient camp further to the front. . . . The present camp is a little too far from the scene of the most important operations.

April 11.—I am just recovering from a terrible scare. Early this morning I was awakened by a despatch from Fitz-John's headquarters stating that Fitz had made an ascension in the balloon this morning, and that the balloon had broken away and come to the ground some three miles southwest, which would be within the enemy's lines. You can imagine how I felt. I at once sent off to the various pickets to find out what they knew and

try to do something to save him, but the order had no sooner gone than in walks Mr. Fitz just as cool as usual. He had luckily come down near my own camp after actually passing over that of the enemy. You may rest assured of one thing: you won't catch me in the confounded balloon, nor will I allow any other generals to go up in it. . . .

Don't worry about the wretches; they have done nearly their worst, and can't do much more. I am sure that I will win in the end, in spite of all their rascality. History will present a sad record of these traitors who are willing to sacrifice the country and its army for personal spite and personal aims. The people will soon understand the whole matter.

April 14, 11 P.M., Camp Winfield Scott.— . . . I believe I now know who instigated the attack upon me and the country. . . . So Fox told you all about our troubles. They were severe for some time, but we are pretty well over the worst of them. . . . I do not expect to lose many men, but to do the work mainly with artillery, and so avoid much loss of life. Several brave fellows have already gone to their long home, but not a large number.

I can't tell you how soon I will attack, as it will depend upon the rapidity with which certain preliminary work can be done and the heavy guns brought up. I do not fear a repulse. I shall not quit the camps until I do so to continue the march on Richmond. If I am repulsed once, will try it again, and keep it up until we succeed. But I do not anticipate a repulse; am confident of success. . . . I received to-day a very kind letter from old Mr. Blair, which I enclose for you to keep for me. . . . Remained at home this morning, doing office-work, but rode out all the afternoon; rode to the front and took another look at secesh. . . .

8.30 A.M., 15th.—Am about starting for the gunboats, which are anchored near here, to take a better look at the opposite shore. . . . It is raining a little this morning—not much more than a drizzle. . . .

April 18, 1.15 A.M.— . . . About a half-hour ago the accustomed intermittent sound of artillery was varied in its monotony

by a very heavy and continued rattle of musketry, with the accompaniment of a very respectable firing of artillery. I started at once for the telegraph-office, and endeavored in vain for some ten or fifteen minutes to arouse the operators at the stations in the direction of the firing. So I ordered twenty of the escort to saddle up, and started off Hudson, Sweitzer, and the Duc de Chartres to learn the state of the case. The firing has ceased now for some minutes, and I am still ignorant as to its whereabouts and cause. Of course I must remain up until I know what it is. I had had Arthur, Wright, Hammerstein, Radowitz, and the Comte de Paris, as well as Colburn, also up, with some of the escort ready to move or carry orders, as the case may be, but just now told them to lie down until I sent for them. It is a beautiful moonlight night, clear and pleasant—almost too much so for sleeping. . . . Poor Wagner, of the Topogs, lost an arm this afternoon by the bursting of a shell; he is doing well, however.

Merrill was severely but not dangerously wounded in the arm yesterday. In Smith's affair yesterday we lost, I fear, nearly 200 killed and wounded. The object I proposed had been fully accomplished with the loss of about 20, when, after I left the ground, a movement was made in direct violation of my orders, by which the remainder of the loss was uselessly incurred. I do not yet know the details nor who is responsible. We have a severe task before us, but we will gain a brilliant success. . . . Colburn is my stand-by—so true and faithful. Many of my aides are excellent. No general ever labored under greater disadvantages, but I will carry it through in spite of everything. I hope Franklin will be here to-morrow or next day. I will then invest Gloucester and attack it at the same time I do York. When the *Galena* arrives I will cause it to pass the batteries, take them in reverse, and cut off the enemy's communications by York river. As I write I hear our guns constantly sounding and the bursting of shells in Secession.

9 P.M.—The firing of last night was caused by the attempt of a part of the enemy to cross the stream in Smith's front. They were repulsed at once; tried it later, and were again driven back.

April 19, 10.30 P.M.— . . . To-day it has been very quiet; our batteries have merely fired enough to keep the enemy en-

tirely silent at his works in front of Smith and at Wynn's Mill. Last night we commenced a battery, at Farnholdt's house, for five 100-pounder Parrotts and one 200-pounder Parrott; also one for fifteen heavy guns about two thousand yards from the enemy's main defences; another for six and one for five close by. Another for six was armed to-day, and kept down the enemy's fire at Wynn's Mill. To-morrow evening we commence batteries for thirteen mortars. About Monday night we will construct the first parallel and several other batteries in exposed positions, leaving those already commenced to cover the work and render it more safe. We shall soon be raining down a terrible tempest on this devoted place. To-day the enemy sent a flag of truce to Smith, asking a suspension of hostilities to bury the killed of the 16th. The officer who met with Sweitzer acknowledged that their loss was very severe and the bearing of our men admirable. I received to-day a letter from Burnside, which I enclose. . . .

Franklin arrived yesterday and spent the night in my tent. He is at Ship Point to-night; I expect his division to-morrow. . . . Don't be at all discouraged; all is going well. I know exactly what I am about. I can't go "with a rush" over strong posts. I must use heavy guns and silence their fire; all that takes much time, and I have not been longer than the usual time for such things—much less than the usual, in truth. . . .

I can't tell you when Yorktown is to be attacked, for it depends on circumstances that I cannot control. It shall be attacked the first moment I can do it successfully. But I don't intend to hurry it; I cannot afford to fail. I may have the opportunity of carrying the place next week, or may be delayed a couple of weeks; much, of course, depends on the rapidity with which the heavy guns and ammunition arrive. Never mind what such people as — say; they are beneath contempt. . . . I will put in a leaf of holly from the bower some of the men have made in front of my tent to-day. They have made quite an artistic thing of it—holly and pine; it adds much, too, to my comfort, as it renders the tent more private and cool.

April 20, 7.30 A.M.— . . . It has been raining more or less all night, and if it were not for the men I would enjoy the rain, for I rather like to hear it patter on the tent.

I have a fire in my stove this morning, so it is quite com-

fortable. My tent is the same the aides use for an office ; it has a floor of pine boughs—a carpet of boughs, I suppose I ought to say—a table in the middle, a desk in one corner, my bed in another, my saddle in another, a wood-pile, etc., in the last. I have a splendid two-legged washstand which Charles's mechanical ingenuity devised. Then I have a clothes-rack, consisting of a sapling with the stumps of the branches projecting. So you see I am living quite *en prince*.

April 21.—Yesterday was rather unpleasant ; rained a good deal. To-day about the same ; not raining much yet, but a kind of drizzle. Had a letter yesterday from Francis B. Cutting, of New York, hoping that I would not allow these treacherous hounds to drive me from my path. Have just replied to it.

April 22, 11.15 P.M.— . . . The enemy has been blazing away a good deal to-day, but hurt nothing, however ; he tried his best at a skirmish with some of Smith's men this morning, but was repulsed with loss. It is said that some of his troops were blacks. I do not, however, give full credit to this. It seems too improbable to be true. The navy have been firing this morning at long range.

April 23, 7 A.M.— . . . Some few shots fired already, but not many ; secesh don't mean to get up very early. I am rather anxious to hear the result of last night's work ; for I am in hopes that I can get all the batteries that have been commenced well aimed to-night, so that the first parallel may be commenced at once. The weather has cleared off beautifully again, so that I am in strong hopes we shall have no more rain for some time. You have no idea of the effect of a couple of days' rain in this country ; roads, camps, etc., become impassable. . . .

11.30 P.M.— . . . Have been working hard all day, but not in the saddle ; it has been head-work in my tent to-day. I am getting on splendidly with my "slow preparations." The prince is delighted and thinks my work gigantic. I do believe that I am avoiding the fault of the Allies at Sebastopol, and quietly preparing the way for great success. I have brought forty heavy guns in battery ; to-morrow night I hope to have twelve new guns and five to ten heavy mortars in battery. I begin in the morning

the redoubts to cover the flank of the first parallel, which will be constructed to-morrow night. I will not open fire unless the enemy annoys us, hoping to get all the guns in battery and the trenches well advanced before meeting with serious opposition. We have done much more than they suspect. Have ordered a forced reconnoissance of a dangerous point in the morning ; it may cost several lives, but I have taken all possible precautions, and hope to gain the information necessary with but little loss. There is no other choice than to run the risk. . . . Everything is as quiet now as if there were no enemy within a hundred miles of us. The *Galena*, under Rodgers, will be here by day after to-morrow.

April 26.—Again raining, and has been all the morning. Grover carried a redoubt of the rebels most handsomely this morning. It was one from which they had it in their power to annoy the left of our parallels, and it was an object to get rid of it. The work was handsomely done ; the work carried by assault, and then so much destroyed that it can be of no further use to the rebels. Fifteen prisoners were taken in the affair. We lost three killed, one mortally and about ten others slightly wounded ; have not all the details yet. We got eight immense mortars up by water last night ; but a canal-boat loaded with empty shells ran aground in sight of secesh, who has been blazing away at them ; sent one shot through. He has stopped firing now, probably because he cannot see on account of the rain. To-night we complete the first parallel, which will be nearly four thousand yards long—an immense work. From the manner in which our men pitched into the little redoubt this morning it is clear that the *morale* is on our side. The men found quite a deep and broad ditch in front of the affair, but over it they went without a moment's hesitation !

April 27, midnight.— . . . Was engaged with Barnard, Porter, etc., until about one, when I rode to the trenches. Then, of course, had to walk ; a good deal was muddy, so it was tiresome. Went over the whole extent and saw everything with care. The enemy have fired a good deal to-day, but the men are now so well covered that no one has been hurt to-day. Commenced to-day batteries for fifteen 10-inch mortars, and to-night another battery

for heavy guns ; another for ten mortars to-morrow morning ; an extension of the parallel on the left commenced to-night. By to-morrow night the parallel shall be finished in all its details, as well as the two covering redoubts on the left. Some time day after to-morrow I hope to have thirty-five mortars in battery. To-morrow night will open a tuyau in advance leading to a new gun-battery fast getting ready to blow secesh up. He will have a bad time of it when we open. Have news this evening *via* Richmond that New Orleans is in our possession. I presume it is true. So the work goes bravely on. . . . Yesterday made Fitz Porter "Director of the Siege"—a novel title, but made necessary by the circumstances of the case. I give all my orders relating to the siege through him, making him at the same time commandant of the siege operations and a chief of staff for that portion of the work. This new arrangement will save me much trouble, and relieve my mind greatly, and save much time. In going over the line of trenches yesterday I found so many blunders committed that I was very thankful to put Porter on duty at once. . . . The good fellow (Colburn) never leaves me ; wherever I ride he sticks close after me. He is one of the very best men I ever knew, so thoroughly honest and reliable. His judgment is excellent and he is perfectly untiring. Day and night are about the same to him, and he will start out on a long ride at midnight in a pitch-dark or rainy night with as much good-humor as at midday. "Kentuck" (horse) is still at Fort Monroe sick ; will rejoin in a few days, I hope. Marsh is with him, and I am sometimes half-wicked enough to suspect that Marsh finds Fort Monroe more comfortable than camp would be.

April 28, 11.45 P.M.— . . . Rode out this P.M., and went over most of the ground from right to left. Commenced some new work still more to the front to-night ; as it was exposed and dangerous, and required noiseless and rapid working, I as usual gave it to the regulars to do. Have this moment heard that although the rebels have been firing a great deal (there goes another gun), they have wounded but one man ; the men should be well covered by this time, so I fancy the work is safe. I have also (there goes another gun) ordered a lot of rifle-pits for sharpshooters to be pushed out well to the front ; we will, I hope, gain a good deal of ground to-night. Am getting on nicely. Will have

some more batteries ready for their guns by to-morrow P.M., and will very shortly be able to open on secesh. He tried to annoy one of our working parties this morning with a couple of guns; I sent out a field-battery and silenced him after four rounds.

8 A.M.—Colburn came back from the trenches after midnight, and reported all going on well; the regulars had covered themselves well by that time, and the fire of the enemy had only wounded one man, and that not badly. Clitz was in command of the working party last night. To-day weather good; will not rain. Hope to make good progress this morning. Good deal of firing going on now.

April 30, A.M.—Had a quiet night; very little firing; drove them out of an orchard whence they had been annoying us, and pushed them still further in towards their works. A good deal of firing on their part yesterday; did very little harm, killing some three and wounding four or five of our people. Scarcely a gun fired to-day as yet; we are working like horses and will soon be ready to open. It will be a tremendous affair when we do begin, and will, I hope, make short work of it. . . . Have put the regulars on the exposed portions of the work, they work so much better. A raw, disagreeable day; I fear it will rain—unless it snows; wind from east. . . .

10.30 P.M.—After I got through my morning work went down to see the opening of Battery No. 1. It worked handsomely; drove all the rebel schooners away from the wharf, and made a general scatteration. The effect was excellent. Shall not open the general fire for some four days—I hope on Monday A.M.

Next morning (May 1).—Another wet, drizzly, uncomfortable sort of a day. Good deal of firing during the night. I shall be very glad when we are really ready to open fire, and then finish this confounded affair. I am tired of public life; and even now, when I am doing the best I can for my country in the field, I know that my enemies are pursuing me more remorselessly than ever, and “kind friends” are constantly making themselves agreeable by informing me of the pleasant predicament in which I am—the rebels on one side, and the abolitionists and other scoundrels on the other. I believe in my heart and conscience, however, that I am walking on the ridge between the two gulfs,

and that all I have to do is to try to keep the path of honor and truth, and that God will bring me safely through. At all events I am willing to leave the matter in His hands, and will be content with the decision of the Almighty.

May 3, 12.30 A.M.—After the hot firing of to-day everything is so unusually still that I am a little suspicious that our friends may intend a sortie; so I have taken all the steps necessary to be ready for them, and am sitting up for a while to await developments. I feel much better satisfied when they are firing than when they are silent. To-day they have wasted about a thousand rounds and have done us no harm worth speaking of, except (Irish) bursting one of their own guns. We are now nearly ready to open; shall begin, I think, on Monday morning, certainly by Tuesday. If all works well it is not impossible that we shall have Yorktown by Wednesday or Thursday. The task is a difficult one, yet I am sure we have taken the right way to accomplish our purpose, and that we will soon win. I fear that we are to have another storm to-night. We want no more rain, but will make the best of it if it comes. Had plenty of work to do at home all the morning, and in the afternoon rode down to "Shield's House" to meet the new commander of the flotilla, Capt. Smith. . . . I don't half like the perfect quietness which reigns now. I have given orders to take advantage of it and push our approaches as far forward as possible. It don't seem natural. It looks like a sortie or an evacuation. If either, I hope it may be the former. I do not want these rascals to get away from me without a sound drubbing, which they richly deserve and will be sure to get if they remain. . . . I feel that the fate of a nation depends upon me, and I feel that I have not one single friend at the seat of government. Any day may bring an order relieving me from command. If they will simply let me alone I feel sure of success; but will they do it?

May 5, 9.30 A.M.— . . . You will have learned ere this that Yorktown is ours. It is a place of immense strength, and was very heavily armed. It so happened that our preparation for the attack was equally formidable, so that Lee, Johnston, and Davis confessed that they could not hold the place. They evacuated it in a great hurry, leaving their heavy guns, baggage, etc. I sent

the cavalry after them at once, and our advance is now engaged with them at Williamsburg. The weather is infamous; it has been raining all night, and is still raining heavily; no signs of stopping; roads awful. I hope to get to West Point to-day, although the weather has delayed us terribly. It could not well be worse, but we will get through nevertheless. The villains (secesh) have scattered torpedoes everywhere—by springs, wells, etc. It is the most murderous and barbarous thing I ever heard of.

CHAPTER XIX.

Confederate retreat—Pursuit towards Williamsburg—Battle of Williamsburg—The horse Dan Webster.

It appears that Gen. Johnston, the Confederate commander, regarded the position of Yorktown and the Warwick as easily held against a simple assault, but as untenable against siege operations, or when we could pass up the York or James rivers; therefore he withdrew as soon as satisfied that we were on the point of using our heavy guns.

He directed the movement to commence at dusk on the 4th of May, Magruder's command to move by the Lee's Mill road, to halt at the junction of roads on the Yorktown side of Williamsburg, and occupy the line of fortifications; Longstreet's division to follow Magruder's; D. H. Hill's and G. W. Smith's divisions to march by the Yorktown road. Longstreet, Hill, and Smith were to pass through Williamsburg, Smith halting on the Barhamsville road far enough out to leave room for the other troops between himself and the town. It was expected that Magruder and Hill would clear the way to enable Longstreet and Smith to start at nine P.M., so that the whole army could reach Williamsburg soon after midnight; but it was sunrise of the 5th before Smith's road was clear, and his rear reached the fortifications near Williamsburg about noon. He found that the fortifications were unoccupied; and as skirmishing was taking place about two miles back, he halted a small body whom he found between the works and Williamsburg, and reported the state of affairs to Gen. Johnston, who ordered back McLaws's brigade and Stuart's cavalry.

Early in the morning of the 4th of May, the moment I learned that our troops were in possession of Yorktown and the line of the Warwick, I ordered Gen. Stoneman in pursuit with all the available force of cavalry and horse-artillery, supported by infantry, on both the Lee's Mill and Yorktown roads to Williamsburg.

The next, and by far the most important, step was to throw Franklin's division, supported promptly and strongly, as rapidly as possible up the York river by water, to land on its right bank opposite West Point, in order to take in reverse whatever works might exist between that point and Yorktown, and to cut off, if possible, the enemy's trains and troops still south of the mouth of the Pamunkey.

While keeping steadily in view Stoneman's operations and his proper support, I at once turned my attention to expediting the movement up the York river by water. The weather was so bad and the wharf facilities at Yorktown so deficient that it was very difficult to bring order out of chaos, and Franklin's division did not reach its destination until the 6th of May.

On the morning of the 4th, then, Stoneman moved out of Yorktown with four batteries of horse-artillery, the 1st and 6th U. S. Cavalry, the 8th Ill. Cavalry, and Barker's squadron of Ill. cavalry. Hooker's division was ordered to move as rapidly as possible by the same road in support, and Heintzelman was ordered to hold himself in readiness to follow with Kearny's division if necessary.

Smith having reported the enemy's infantry and cavalry in force about one and a half miles in rear of Lee's Mill, Stoneman was ordered to cut off their retreat in the vicinity of the Half-way House. At the same time Sumner, in command of the left, was ordered to restore the bridges over the Warwick and place Smith's and Couch's divisions of the 4th corps, and Casey's if necessary, in front of the reported hostile force, endeavoring to hold them where they were until Stoneman could gain their line of retreat; but attacking if they fell back. His pursuit was to be by the Lee's Mill road, with Smith leading. The remaining divisions—those of Porter, Sedgwick, Richardson, and Sykes—were held in readiness to support either Keyes, Heintzelman, or Franklin, as might prove most advantageous. Stoneman was thus ordered not only to pursue and harass the enemy's rear-guard, but also to endeavor to cut off those on the Lee's Mill road in front of Sumner.

About six miles from Yorktown Stoneman came upon the enemy's pickets; two miles further on he came up with their rear-guard, a regiment of cavalry, posted on the further bank of a difficult ravine. Gibson's battery soon drove them out of

this position. At this point he sent Gen. Emory, with Benson's battery, the 3d Penn., and Barker's squadron, across to the Lee's Mill road to cut off the force in front of Sumner, who was supposed to be advancing by that road. With the remainder of his force Stoneman pushed on as rapidly as safety permitted to occupy the junction of the Yorktown and Lee's Mill roads, about two miles south of Williamsburg. Before detaching Emory, Stoneman had communicated with Sumner's advanced guard, and had also learned that Hooker was close behind on the Yorktown road. Gen. P. St. G. Cooke, commanding the advanced guard, consisting of a section of Gibson's battery and a part of the 1st U. S. Cavalry, upon debouching from the wood found himself at the junction of the two roads immediately in front of a strong earthwork (Fort Magruder) flanked by redoubts, and in presence of a strong rear-guard, consisting of a regiment of cavalry, one battery, and three regiments of infantry. With his small force Cooke made immediate dispositions to attack, and Stoneman hastened up the remainder of the 1st Cavalry and of Gibson's battery.

The cleared ground available for the operations of cavalry and artillery was here so limited that only about three hundred cavalry and one battery could be brought into action. Foreseeing that he must soon retreat unless promptly supported by the infantry—some two miles in rear at last accounts—Stoneman formed the remainder of his force in a clearing half a mile in rear, in order to cover the withdrawal of his advanced guard when that became necessary, and sent to hurry up the infantry. With great difficulty, so deep was the mud and so thick the abattis, Gibson got his battery in position, and Col. W. A. Grier formed his regiment (1st U. S.) to support it. Meanwhile the enemy, strongly reinforced from his main body, had thrown himself into the abandoned works, and several regiments of infantry were seen moving in a direction threatening to turn Stoneman's right, on which he directed Maj. L. Williams, commanding the 6th U. S. Cavalry, to make a demonstration through the woods on the right in order to check the enemy until the infantry could arrive.

The fire of Fort Magruder upon Cooke's command was producing serious effects, and the 6th Cavalry had come upon a strong force of infantry and cavalry, and was saved from destruc-

tion by a gallant charge made by Capt. Saunders, commanding the rear squadron, during the withdrawal of the regiment.

Col. Grier had made two brilliant charges ; men and horses were falling rapidly, and the enemy was receiving reinforcements every moment. After having held the position for about three-quarters of an hour Stoneman learned that Hooker could not get up for two hours. Under these circumstances, having done all in his power to hold his position, he fell back upon the clearing already occupied by his reserves, prepared to hold it to the utmost. He at least held the enemy to their works, and gave us the opportunity of fighting the battle of the next day.

As already stated, Gen. Emory was detached at the Halfway House, and on reaching the Lee's Mill road encountered an equal force of the enemy, whom he drove back on the Lee's Mill road, whence they escaped by a circuitous route along the banks of the James. Their escape was accounted for by the fact that Emory could not follow them without abandoning the road he was ordered to hold, and leaving his battery there unprotected, as he had no infantry. Smith's advance reached Skiff's creek at about 11.30, to find the bridge in flames and the road impassable. He therefore, by direction of Gen. Sumner, moved across to the Yorktown road, and, following it, reached Stoneman's position at about 5.30 o'clock, Gen. Sumner arriving with him and assuming command of all the troops at the front.

Hooker's division had encountered Smith's filing into the Yorktown road, and was obliged to halt for some three or four hours until it had passed. Subsequently, on its arrival at Chesapeake Church, Gen. Heintzelman turned it off by a cross-road into the Lee's Mill road, thus changing places with Smith. Marching part of the night, he came in sight of Fort Magruder early on the 5th. As soon as Smith reached the front his division was deployed and directed by Gen. Sumner to attack the works in front of him ; but confusion arising in the dense forest, and darkness coming on, the attempt was deferred to the next day.

The troops bivouacked in the woods, and a heavy rain began, which lasted till the morning of the 6th, and made the roads, already terribly cut up by the enemy's troops and trains, almost impassable. Early in the evening of the 4th I learned that Smith had reached the front, and that at six P.M. two more divi-

sions would soon be ready, and were only waiting to rest the men and let them take a little food before attacking; and that the works would soon be carried, as they were then reported to be held only by a rear-guard of a regiment of cavalry, two guns, and four or five regiments of infantry.

I therefore pushed with redoubled energy the arrangements to throw a force by water to the mouth of the Pamunkey, and had not the slightest reason to suppose that my presence was at all necessary at the front.

The position is about four miles in extent, the right resting on College creek, and the left on Queen's creek; nearly three-fourths of its front being covered by tributaries of these two creeks, upon which there are ponds.

The ground between the heads of the boundary streams is a cultivated plain, across which a line of detached works had been constructed, consisting of Fort Magruder, a large work in the centre with a bastion front, and twelve other redoubts and epaulments for field-guns.

The parapet of Fort Magruder is about six feet high and nine feet thick; the ditch nine feet wide and nine feet deep, filled with water. The length of the interior crest is about six hundred yards. The redoubts have strong profiles, but are of small dimensions, having faces of about forty yards. The woods in front of the position were felled, and the open ground in front of the works was dotted with numerous rifle-pits.

The roads leading from the lower part of the Peninsula towards Williamsburg, one along the York river (the Yorktown road) and the other along the James (the Lee's Mill road), unite between the heads of the tributary streams a short distance in front of Fort Magruder, by which they are commanded, and debouch from the woods just before uniting. A branch from the James river road leaves it about one and three-fourths of a mile below Fort Magruder and unites with the road from Allen's landing to Williamsburg, which crosses the tributary of College creek over a dam at the outlet of the pond, and passes just in rear of the line of works, being commanded by the three redoubts on the right of the line. At about the same distance from Fort Magruder a branch leaves the York river road and crosses the tributary of Queen's creek on a dam, and, passing over the position and through the woods in its rear, finally enters

Williamsburg. This road was commanded by redoubts on the left of the line of works.

On the morning of the 5th the position of our troops was as follows: On the extreme left, Emory, holding the road to Allen's farm; next, on his right, Hooker's division; next, in the centre, Stoneman, holding the main road; on his right Smith's division. Kearny, Couch, and Casey were still in rear, having bivouacked where the night overtook them. Couch and Casey were ordered to march at daylight to support Smith; at about nine o'clock Kearny was ordered up in support of Hooker.

The battle of Williamsburg was an accident, brought about by the rapid pursuit of our troops. The enemy were very anxious to get beyond West Point before we could reach it by water. Late in the afternoon of the 4th Gen. G. W. Smith was ordered to march at 2.30 A.M. of the 5th, and place his position north of Barhamsville to check any attempt on the Confederate line of retreat from the upper York river. Longstreet and Hill were to follow Smith on the Barhamsville road for about six miles, and then turn off at the Burned Tavern and take the Charles City road to Richmond *via* Long bridge. Magruder was to move by New Kent Court-House and Bottom bridge. From Barhamsville Smith was to follow Magruder. Smith commanded the troops on the New Kent Court-House road, Longstreet those on the Charles City road. The rain made the roads so bad that when we caught up with their rear-guard they were forced to reinforce it from their main body, and hold the works as long as possible, in order to enable their trains to escape.

On the afternoon of the 4th Longstreet's division, six brigades, had halted near Williamsburg, four brigades at or in rear of the line of works, two brigades, Wilcox and Colston, on the Richmond side. About seven next morning Wilcox was ordered to return to the line of works and report to Gen. Anderson. Wilcox was placed on the right and about one thousand yards in front of Fort Magruder, and at the time held the right of the Confederate line, posted in the pine-woods with occasional clearings. He supposed that there was nothing but cavalry in his front, but, sending two companies into the woods, they captured three of our infantry soldiers; whereupon he sent in a Mississippi regiment, deployed as skirmishers, with orders to advance

until forced to halt, and to find out what was in front. Up to this time there had been merely a dropping fire of skirmishers, giving the impression that the woods were held by dismounted cavalry; but now heavy firing followed, and the report came back to Wilcox that three United States brigades were there in position. These brigades composed Hooker's division. And all this must have taken place between nine and ten A.M.

Wilcox immediately sent for reinforcements, and the rest of Longstreet's division gradually came up to his support, mostly being placed on his right, Gen. Richard Anderson finally taking command. Early in the afternoon, being apprehensive for his right, Anderson again attacked, took five guns of Webber's battery, and brought Hooker to a standstill, inflicting heavy losses.

Between three and four o'clock Kearny reached the front. He had received the order to advance at nine o'clock, but, from the condition of the roads and their being blocked with troops, with all his energy and exertions he was unable to reach Hooker until the time mentioned. He at once relieved Hooker's exhausted troops, and, promptly attacking, drove back the enemy at every point. Hooker's losses were severe, and when I next saw him, a day or two afterwards, he was much depressed and thought that he had accomplished nothing, so much so that I felt it necessary to encourage him. It was not until some time afterwards that he came to the conclusion that he had accomplished a brilliant feat of arms.

Emory had been left to guard the road leading to Allen's farm, near the James. Being informed on the morning of the 5th that the enemy's right could be turned, he called upon Gen. Heintzelman for infantry to enable him to make the attempt. Late in the afternoon one of Kearny's brigades and two batteries were sent to him for that purpose, "but that was found impracticable from the nature of the locality, the lateness of the evening, and the want of a guide."

While all this was going on on our left Sumner reconnoitred the position in the centre and on our right. Finding that one of the redoubts on the Confederate left was unoccupied, he, at about eleven o'clock, ordered Hancock's brigade, of Smith's division, to cross by a dam at the foot of one of the large ponds and take possession of it. This he did with five regiments of

the division, and, finding the next redoubt also unoccupied, he promptly seized it, and sent for reinforcements to enable him to advance further and take the next redoubt, which commanded the plain between his position and Fort Magruder, and would have enabled him to take in reverse and cut the communication of the troops engaged with Gens. Hooker and Kearny.

The enemy soon began to show himself in strength before him, and, as his rear and right flank were somewhat exposed, he repeated his request for reinforcements. Gen. Smith was twice ordered to join him with the rest of his division, but each time the order was countermanded at the moment of execution, Gen. Sumner not being willing to weaken the centre. At length, in reply to Gen. Hancock's repeated messages for more troops, Gen. Sumner sent him an order to fall back to his first position, the execution of which Gen. Hancock deferred as long as possible, being unwilling to give up the advantage already gained; and fearing to expose his command by such a movement.

As the head of Couch's division did not arrive until one o'clock, it was entirely proper for Gen. Sumner to hesitate about weakening his centre until that hour. The remaining brigades of Couch followed the first immediately, Casey arriving early in the afternoon. Couch's 1st brigade, Peck's, was deployed on Hooker's right, and promptly repulsed the attack made upon it, thus affording Hooker sensible relief. Soon after it was relieved by the other two brigades, who remained undisturbed.

As already stated, as soon as our troops were in possession of the enemy's works, on the morning of the 4th, I gave the necessary orders for the pursuit, and, when all that was accomplished, drove into Yorktown in an ambulance. The enemy had made a free distribution of torpedoes in the roads, within the works, and in places where our men would be apt to go—for instance, near wells and springs, telegraph-offices, and store-houses—so that some of our men were killed. To place mines or torpedoes in the path of assaulting columns is admissible under the customs of war, but such use of them as was made here is barbarous in the extreme. When I entered Yorktown our progress was much delayed by the caution made necessary by the presence of these torpedoes. I at once ordered that they should be discovered and removed by the Confederate prisoners. They

objected very strenuously, but were forced to do the work. After Williamsburg one of the Confederate surgeons, sent in to offer to take care of their wounded in our hands, told me that these torpedoes were planted at the close of the evacuation, and mentioned the name of an officer whom he saw engaged in this work.

As soon as we had possession of Yorktown the gunboats started up the York river to ascertain whether the transports with Franklin's division could safely ascend, and to capture any of the enemy's transports they could find.

If the condition of affairs near Williamsburg justified it, I intended going to West Point by water myself. Early on the 5th I sent Col. Sweitzer and Maj. Hammerstein, of my staff, to the front, to keep me informed of the condition of affairs and the progress of events. I went to Yorktown to expedite the movement by water, and to provide for the transportation of supplies to the troops in advance.

Until about one P.M. I learned nothing indicating that the affair at Williamsburg was more than a simple attack upon a rear-guard, but at that hour I received intelligence that the state of the contest was unfavorable and that my presence was urgently required. Sedgwick's division was then held ready to embark in support of Franklin. But I ordered him to move beyond Yorktown a short distance, ready to move to the front if ordered. Porter and Richardson were also instructed to be ready to obey whatever orders they might receive.

I returned at once to my camp to give these and other necessary orders, and, remaining there only a few minutes, started with half a dozen aides and a few orderlies for the front. The distance was more than fourteen miles, over terrible roads, much obstructed by trains; but as I had my most trustworthy horse, Dan Webster, I made better progress than was agreeable to the escort, most of whom had been left behind when I reached the field of battle.

Dan was one of those horses that could trot all day long at a very rapid gait which kept all other horses at a gallop. I think it was on this ride that he earned from the aides the title of "that Devil Dan"—a name which he justified on many another long and desperate ride before I gave up the command of the Army of the Potomac.

Dan was the best horse I ever had ; he never was ill for an hour, never fatigued, never disturbed under fire, and never lost his equanimity or his dignity, except on one occasion. That was when we abandoned the position at Harrison's Bar under the orders to return to Washington. From a very natural feeling I remained there until all the trains and troops had left, and, sending forward all the escort and staff, remained alone in the works for a little time, my mind full of the fatal consequences of the order I was forced to carry into execution. At length I mounted and rode out to join the escort ; as I passed through the abandoned works Dan, for the first time in his life, gave vent to his feelings by a series of most vicious plunges and kicks. It was possible that the flies, who had enjoyed a whole army to feed upon, concentrated all their energies upon Dan ; but I have always more than suspected that, in his quiet way, Dan understood the condition of affairs much better than the authorities at Washington, and merely wished to inform me in his own impressive manner that he fully agreed with my views as to the folly of abandoning the position, and that he, at least, had full confidence in his master.

Dan and I never quarrelled, and the dear old fellow survived the war for many years, dying at a ripe old age in 1879. No matter how long we might be parted—once for nearly four years—he always recognized me the moment we met again, and in his own way showed his pleasure at seeing me. Even on the day of his death, which was a painless one from old age, whenever I entered his stall he tried to rise and greet me, but, unable to do that, would lean his head against me and lick my hand. No soldier ever had a more faithful or better horse than I had in Dan Webster.

Riding through mud and water, often obliged to turn into the woods, but never slackening the pace when the road permitted, I reached the front between four and five o'clock. I found everything in a state of chaos and depression. Even the private soldiers saw clearly that, with force enough in hand to gain a victory, we, the pursuers, were on the defensive and content with repulsing attacks, and that there was no plan of action, no directing head. The front line was formed along the nearer edge of the woods, and the rest massed inactive in the clearings. The troops were weary and discouraged ; but my pre-



"DAN WEBSTER," GEN. MCCLELLAN'S WAR-HORSE.

sence at once restored their confidence, and, as they recognized me passing rapidly through their ranks, their wild and joyful cheers told the enemy, as well as our own people, that something unusual had occurred, and that the period of uncertainty and inaction was at an end.

I at once gathered the general officers around me, called upon them for a brief statement of affairs, and promptly made up my mind as to what should be done. This occurred in the clearing, close to the Whittaker House. I found that, owing to some marshy ground, there was no direct communication with the two divisions under Heintzelman on our left; the troops forming the front of our centre were on the hither edge of the woods intervening between us and the enemy, and no one knew whether the enemy were in the woods, and, if so, in what force. Hancock, with his unsupported brigade, was still in possession of the abandoned works on the enemy's left; one of Smith's remaining brigades was in line on our right centre, the other and Casey's division massed in rear; two of Couch's brigades formed the centre, with one in reserve.

I ordered a party to move in to the left to reopen communication with Heintzelman. Just then heavy firing began at Hancock's position, which was two miles from the nearest support, and, grasping at once the fact that he held the key of the field of battle, I ordered Smith, who was chafing like a caged lion, to move as rapidly as possible to Hancock's support with his two remaining brigades and Naglee's. Within five minutes of the time I reached the field Smith was off as rapidly as his men could move; Naglee, with his brigade of Casey's division, following the leading regiment of Smith's division. As soon as the head of Smith's column started I ordered the centre to advance into the woods and gain the more distant edge, driving out any of the enemy who might be there. This was promptly done, and I rode in with them, and into the cleared ground in front, in close view of the enemy's works. There were none of the enemy in the woods, but they held the works in considerable force.

Their position was so strong that when my reconnoissance was completed I did not think proper to attack without making arrangements to use our artillery and carefully arrange our columns of attack.

I therefore returned to the Whittaker House, quickly gave orders for the proper posting of the troops in the centre, and started rapidly for Hancock's position. A little before reaching the dam by which he had crossed I met the column of prisoners whom he had just taken.

Before Gens. Smith and Naglee could reach the field of Gen. Hancock's operations, although they moved with great rapidity, he had been confronted by a superior force. Feigning to retreat slowly, he awaited their onset, and then turned upon them, and, after some terrific volleys of musketry, he charged them with the bayonet, routing and dispersing their whole force, killing, wounding, and capturing from 500 to 600 men, he himself losing only 31 men.

This was one of the most brilliant engagements of the war, and Gen. Hancock merited the highest praise for the soldierly qualities displayed and his perfect appreciation of the vital importance of his position.

Hancock's command consisted of the 5th Wis., 6th Me., and 49th Penn. regiments of volunteers of his own brigade, and the 7th Me. and 33d N. Y. of Davidson's brigade. Keeping on to Hancock's brigade, I remained there long enough to thank them for their gallant conduct, to appreciate the importance of the position and the value of the success gained. I sent some of the approaching reinforcements to occupy a dangerous mass of woods on the right, and, there being no indication of any new attack by the enemy, I left as soon as Smith arrived with sufficient troops to render the position perfectly secure. By the time Smith's troops all arrived and were properly posted it was too dark to attempt any new operations until the next morning.

It was raining heavily and nearly dark when I returned to the Whittaker House, so that nothing more could be done than to arrange for security during the night and a prompt resumption of operations in the morning. All the troops slept on the muddy field, in the rain, with what protection their shelter-tents gave them, and many without food. I was not much better off, for, with the exception of a piece of biscuit for breakfast on the morning of the 6th, I had nothing to eat from the early morning of the 5th until late in the day on the 6th. The night was a horrible one. The little Whittaker House was crowded


with several general officers and their staffs, so that sleep or rest was impossible. It rained hard, and I passed much of the evening among the men, by way of encouraging them, who think little of hardship when their general shares it with them.

It was unfortunate that the absolute necessity of expediting the movement of troops and supplies up the York river detained me so long at Yorktown, and that I did not receive earlier information of the necessity for my presence at the front. All the reports, up to those that took me so rapidly to the field, represented the affair as simply one against an ordinary rear-guard, and with good reason I expected every moment to learn that the enemy was defeated and his works occupied, as the troops on the field of battle were more than enough for the purpose. Could I have arrived at one o'clock it is very certain that Smith, supported by Couch and afterwards by Casey, would have at once debouched from Hancock's ground, and have cut off the retreat of the greater part of the troops engaged against Hooker. Up to the time of Couch's arrival it would probably have been imprudent to move the whole of Smith's division in support of Hancock, but the moment the head of Couch's column appeared near the front it was proper to push Smith forward as rapidly as possible. In fact, Hooker's repulse was of no consequence, except for the loss of life it involved, and his falling back somewhat would only facilitate the decisive advance by our right. When I reached the field the commanding generals gave me the impression that, far from our having a simple rear-guard to deal with, the enemy was present in very heavy force. Therefore, to guard against all eventualities, I sent back orders to Porter to occupy Yorktown, and to Sedgwick and Richardson to advance by land in the morning.

During the night Heintzelman reported to me that Hooker's division had suffered so much that it could not be relied on for the next day, and that Kearny could do no more than hold his own, unless reinforced. But, after fully considering the state of affairs during the evening, I was so confident of the advantage to be derived from Smith's possession of the decisive point that I determined to carry on our operations with the force then in hand, even were the enemy superior in numbers. If the enemy held their ground and were not superior in numbers, it was certain that an advance by Smith and Casey, with the cavalry, direct

on Williamsburg, supported by Couch as the centre was cleared, would cut off all the troops in front of Heintzelman. Even if the enemy proved to be superior in numbers this advance would no doubt cause them to withdraw their right and thus enable Hooker and Kearny to come into line on Smith's left, and I could perfectly well hold my own and keep the enemy in position while the movement to West Point was being carried out. Therefore, during the night, I countermanded the orders to Sedgwick and Richardson, and directed them to return to Yorktown and, together with Porter, embark as rapidly as possible in support of Franklin.

Early on the morning of the 6th it was found that the enemy had abandoned his positions during the night; we at once occupied them and the town of Williamsburg, which was filled with the enemy's wounded, for whose assistance eighteen of the Confederate surgeons were sent by Gen. J. E. Johnston, the Confederate commander.



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